NEW YORK POST
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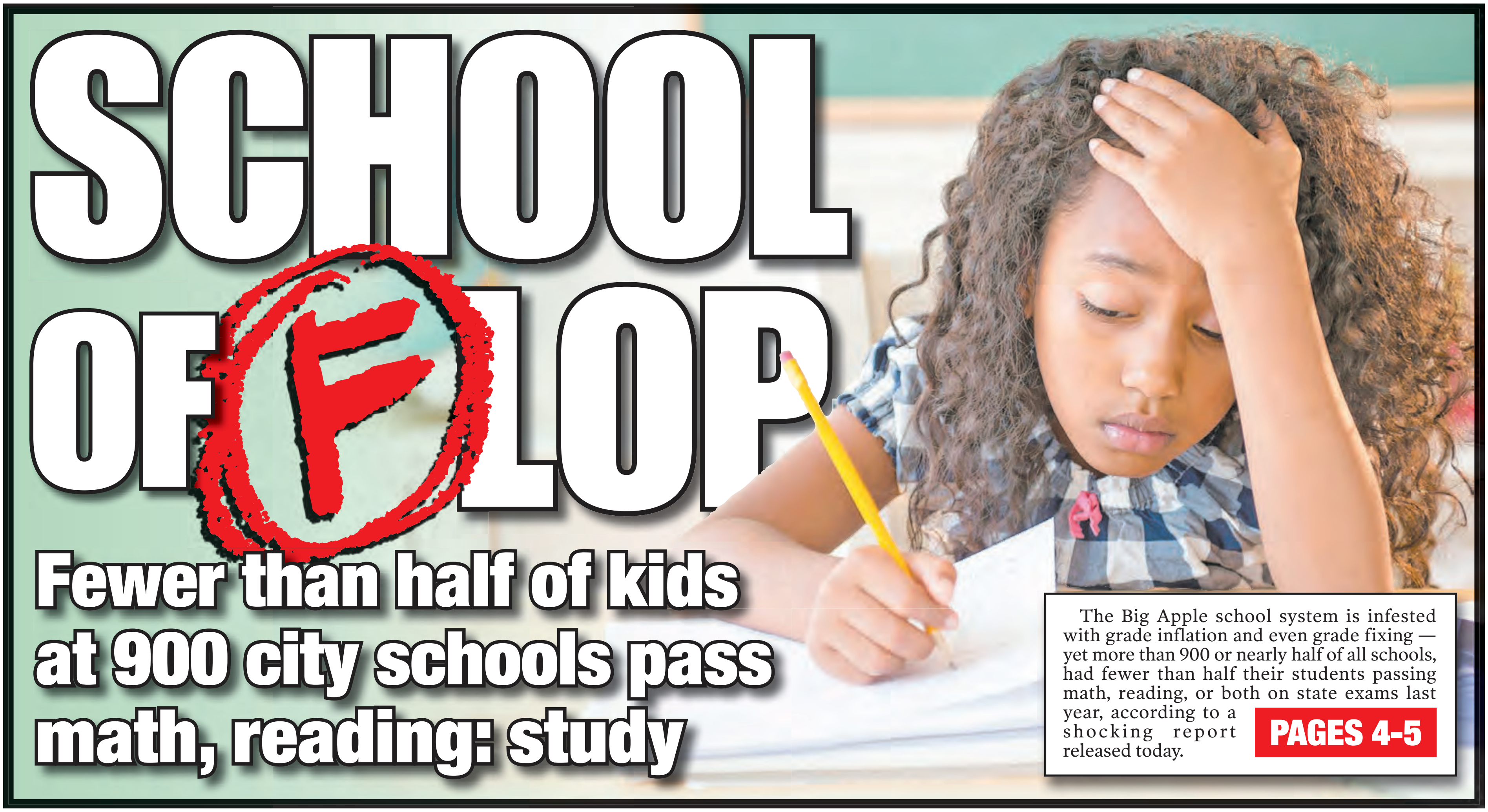
World Cup dreams come crashing down

SEE SPORTS

Folarin Balogun

Imagn Images

US loses battle of the Belg'



SCHOOL OF FLOP

Fewer than half of kids at 900 city schools pass math, reading: study

The Big Apple school system is infested with grade inflation and even grade fixing — yet more than 900 or nearly half of all schools, had fewer than half their students passing math, reading, or both on state exams last year, according to a shocking report released today.

PAGES 4-5

Blame$ GOP as foe closes gap in poll

HOCHUL PASSES BUCK TO BRUCE

Dennis A. Clark

KAT'S CLAW: Gov. Hochul attacked her gubernatorial challenger Bruce Blakeman (below) while on his Long Island turf as the race tightens.

By BRANDON CRUZ,
CARL CAMPANILE
and MATT TROUTMAN

Gov. Hochul took a jaunt to GOP gubernatorial challenger Bruce Blakeman's Long Island home turf Monday — swiping back at his attacks as a bombshell new poll showed the race tightening.

During back-to-back appearances in Nassau and Suffolk counties, a rattled Hochul cast a Blakeman campaign mailer that blamed her and socialist New York City Mayor Mamdani for "sky high taxes, rising utility bills and out of control crime" as pure fantasy.

"That's interesting — because it's not based on fact," she claimed, as she announced a new $100 million grant package for law enforcement tech in Freeport, LI.

Dennis A. Clark

But a recent poll shows Blakeman, the Nassau County executive, trailing Hochul by just 6 points in the governor's race.

Hochul blamed Blakeman's fellow Republicans in Washington, DC, for driving up costs by backing President Trump's war in Iran and tariffs. She also said the Trump administration's move to block federal disaster funds for New York's response to devastating blizzards during February was "political."

"They think it's hurting me, but it's backfiring," Hochul insisted.

Hochul leads 47% to 41% among likely general election voters with 12% undecided, according to the new survey conducted by the firm co/efficient for the right-leaning Coalition to Protect Nassau Taxpayers. The firm accurately predicted that the 2022 race between Hochul and then-Long Island Republican Rep. Lee Zeldin would be closer than public polling anticipated. She won by 6 percentage points — the same spread co/efficient had between the candidates in its September 2022 polling.

The new poll's findings clash with other public surveys showing Hochul is up by as much as 20 points. But it also hinted that Blakeman could capitalize — if he's not already — on voters' worries about rising socialism.

The survey found that 55% of voters were very concerned or concerned about socialism, while 45% were not concerned.

"We are not becoming a socialist state because of an election of a number of individuals in New York City," Hochul insisted during an interview on 103.9 Long Island News Radio Monday morning.

Columbia students sue own law firm

A high-profile lawyer who became one of the most prominent advocates for Jewish college students after Oct. 7 netted a $6.4 million payday from a settlement with Columbia University — by preying on his own clients, a shocking new lawsuit claims.

Marc Kasowitz's firm had represented 43 Jewish and Israeli students who alleged Columbia failed to protect them during the anti-Israel protests that engulfed the Ivy League campus in Manhattan after the Oct. 7, 2023, terror attacks on Israel.

The plaintiffs said that, at first, they were thrilled to be repped by Kasowitz, a veteran Manhattan litigator who was the legal face of a national campaign against campus antisemitism.

Kasowitz's firm eventually reached a confidential mega-settlement with Columbia over the students' accusations earlier this year, according to the new lawsuit filed in Manhattan Supreme Court on Sunday.

But he allegedly refused to give the plaintiffs billing records from their case, while his cut totaled more than $6.4 million, well over half the total settlement, court documents claimed.

The top lawyer also allegedly distributed the remaining settlement proceeds through a secretive non-appealable process and threatened that students who refused to sign the deal would have to proceed without his firm's representation, according to the complaint.

His law firm claimed the new suit is full of falsities and "gross misrepresentations." *Reuven Fenton*

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NEW JERSEY
■ Pick-3 Mon.: **155;** Fireball: **4**
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CONNECTICUT
■ Play-3 Mon.: **546;** Wild: **4**
■ Play-4 Mon.: **8476;** Wild: **3**

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THE PREDATOR BELOW

Wave of early shark attacks in US this year

THAT BITES: Warmer waters and ample seals and sea lions to munch on is bringing maneaters up the coast earlier in the summer season, including at New York beaches — which have already seen bites and halts on swimming.

willyam - stock.adobe.com; Michael Nagle

Shark attacks in 2026

DATE	LOCATION	ATTACK INFO
Jan 8	U.S. Virgin Islands	Arlene Lillis, 56, swimming **(fatal)**
Jan 13	Gualala River, CA	Tommy Civik, 29, surfing
Mar 18	Big River Beach, CA	James Eastman, 39, surfing
May 25	Galveston, TX	unidentified male, 17, fishing
Jun 5	Pensacola Beach, FL	unidentified Navy emlpoyee, swimming
Jun 8	Panama City FL	unidentified male, 20
Jul 1	Ossabaw Island, GA	unidentified male, 13, fishing
Jul 3	Jones Beach State Park, NY	unidentified male

NY Post Design

By MICHAEL KAPLAN
and WILL ZIMMERMAN

Beach season has only just kicked off, but already the ocean's deadliest predators are striking, with seven shark attacks and one fatality in US waters this year.

Sightings of the menaces from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific are up, as experts say warming oceans have pushed the maneaters' migration areas closer to our shores.

Not only that, shark populations are on the rise because they have more to feed off.

"We've fixed the prey base. We're not killing seals and sea lions for furs and oil anymore, so the sharks have more to eat . . . When you have more sea life, you have more sharks," Forrest Galante, a host of Shark Week on the Discovery Channel, told The Post.

Considering that such prey like to bask on or near shore — Galante characterizes seals as being like "a meat sausage [snack] for a shark" — it also brings the razor-toothed hunters closer to shallow waters.

Already a fatality

Last year there were a record-setting 65 unprovoked shark attacks around the world. America had the largest number of such incidents with 25. There were also 12 unprovoked shark-related deaths, tripling the 2024 count, which stood at four. The US recorded one shark-related fatality in each of those years.

However, already in 2026, Minnesotan Arlene Lillis, 56, lost her life to a shark during a vacation to the US Virgin Islands in January. During the attack, the shark bit off her arm, leading her to let loose with what a former lifeguard on the scene described as "ungodly screaming."

A source told The Guardian, "I figured if we got her to a hospital, she'd have a fighting chance," but it was too late and Lillis died from her wounds.

Last month in Panama City, Fla., a Navy employee was critically injured by a shark attack near the naval marina. The victim was on a lunchtime swim when he was chomped.

Jones Beach bloody

Here in New York, a swimmer's foot bone was left exposed after what lifeguards believe was an attack by a tiger shark at Jones Beach on Long Island on Friday afternoon. The underwater predator bit the man's foot around 12 p.m. at the state park's Field 6.

"He came running over to our lifeguard stand . . . his foot was bleeding and he was saying, 'I got bit, I got bit! I don't want to look,' " said lifeguard Kate Maio, who was sitting on the stand and treated the unnamed victim.

Elsewhere over the holiday weekend, a 9-foot shark was spotted at Point Lookout, just west of Jones Beach, but the beach was closed in time.

The Coast Guard has been deploying drones to monitor further out into waters and track when sharks are getting close to where people bathe.

While great white sharks get the most attention from the public, Galante points out the public should be mindful of bull sharks, a sighting of which also shut down Rockaway Beach over the July 4th weekend.

michael.kaplan@nypost.com

How you can avoid being bit

As shark sightings are up from coast to coast, here's how to stay safe this summer:

■**Don't sparkle:**

Leave jewelry and anything else shiny on shore. Sharks often mistake flashy objects for injured fish. Even bright tan lines or the white soles of feet can attract unwanted attention. "That contrast in poor visibility may look like the shark's natural prey," said John Carlson, a researcher at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

■**Pick your moment:**

Poor visibility at dawn or dusk makes it more likely for a shark to mistake a human for a fish, so it's safest to swim in broad daylight. It's also wise to steer clear of schools of fish, as sharks might be feeding in the same area. "The ocean is not your swimming pool," Carlson said. "Be conscientious."

■**Swim smart:**

Avoid swimming alone and don't venture too far offshore. Stay near lifeguards, who often have the best vantage points from their elevated chairs and can quickly clear the water when necessary.

■**Stay calm:**

If you do see a shark, don't panic or splash — the safest thing to do is slowly work your way back out of the water. Simply spotting a shark doesn't mean you're in danger.

Spending is no solution

JENNIFER WEBER

FOR more than a decade, New York City has introduced new ways to identify and improve struggling schools. Yet many of these same schools never stopped struggling.

According to a new report, many of the city's lowest-performing schools today are the very same schools the state was trying to improve more than a decade ago.

The report traced schools across six different accountability systems, dating back to 2012. It found that roughly one-third of the city's chronically struggling schools have remained "identified for improvement" for more than 10 years.

Rather than asking which schools struggled this year, it asks a more important question: Which schools are still struggling more than a decade later? According to the report, many of them still are.

This despite years of reforms, additional funding, and repeated attempts to improve student outcomes.

A child who entered kindergarten when a school was first identified for improvement could have graduated from high school before it was ever turned around.

The report names 906 public schools where a majority of students failed math, English language arts or both.

These schools enroll more than 409,000 students, roughly 43% of all NYC public school students — nearly one out of every two students in the NYC DOE system. In more than 500 schools, a majority of students are failing both subjects.

By connecting schools across multiple accountability systems over multiple years, the report shows that many of those identified as "failing" are in fact the same schools, year after year. Every few years, the city or state introduced another strategy to "improve" struggling schools. The state's accountability systems changed; some schools were merged or renamed.

Yet many of the same schools continued to be "identified for improvement" under successive state accountability frameworks. And the city has not lacked school improvement plans. What it has lacked is evidence that those plans produced any lasting academic gains.

Schools repeatedly identified for improvement often became eligible for additional city, state and federal funding, new improvement initiatives and new accountability requirements.

That's part of why the city now spends more than $42,000 per student, more than double the national average.

Too often, additional funding has been layered onto struggling schools without equally strong accountability to confirm those investments actually improve student achievement.

Too often, additional funding has been layered onto struggling schools without equally strong accountability to confirm those investments actually improve achievement.

For example, PS 123 Mahalia Jackson in Harlem received more than $11.4 million last year, about $43,335 per student, roughly one-third above the citywide average. Yet only about one in four students was proficient in math, and one in three in reading.

Mayor Mamdani recently secured a two-year delay in implementing Albany's class-size mandate.

But if we find that schools already complying with the mandate aren't producing stronger academic outcomes, the state should explain why spending billions more should bring different results.

If we keep pouring funds and improvement efforts into troubled schools, the DOE should have to demonstrate every year that more students are learning.

And teachers must take responsibility, too: An overwhelming majority of NYC teachers receive Effective or Highly Effective ratings each year, under the current teacher evaluation system results.

When nearly every teacher in a low-performing school is rated effective, it's fair to ask whether the current accountability system is measuring the right things.

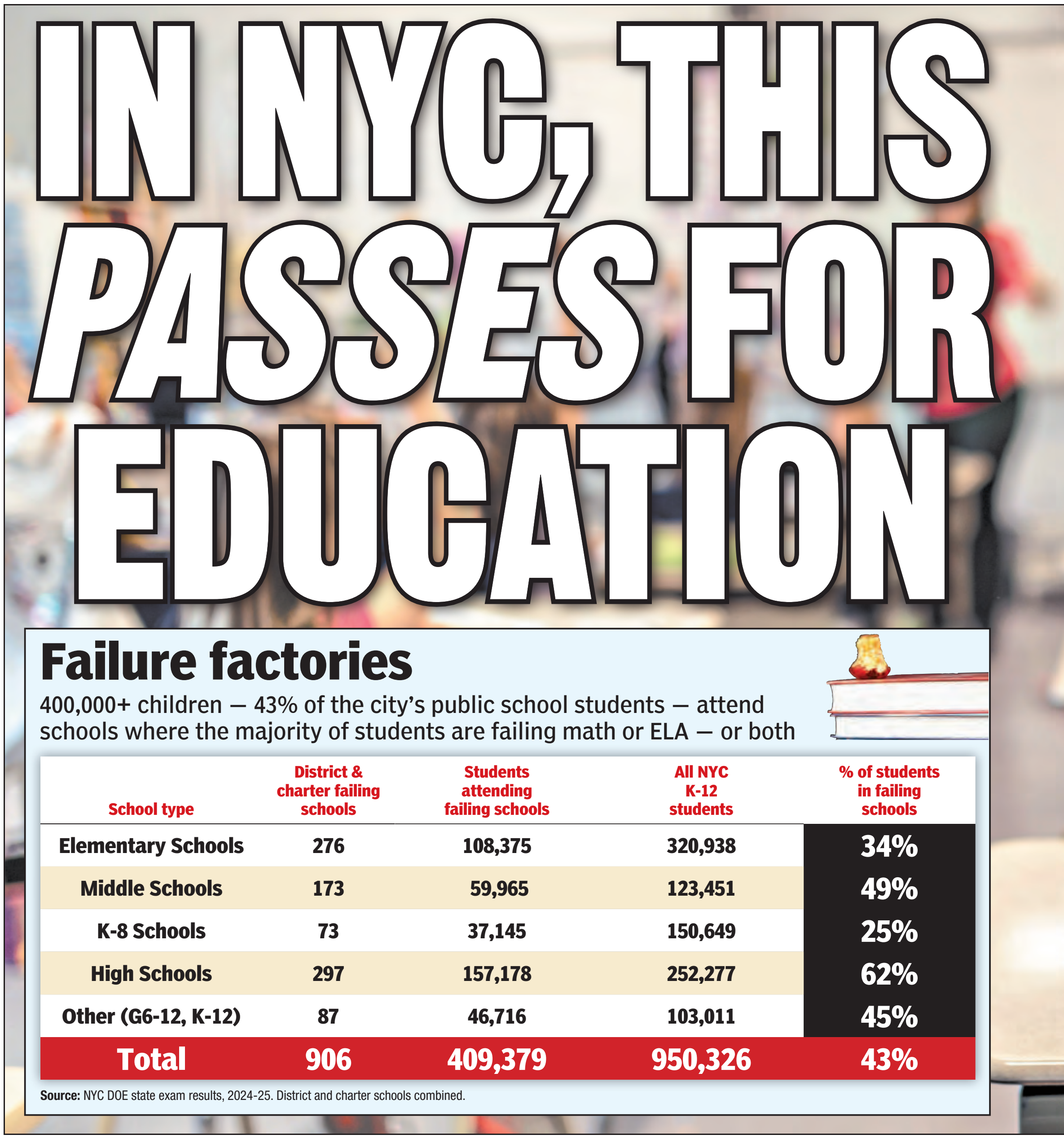
Student outcomes, not simply dollars spent or improvement plans launched, must be the standard.

Too many NYC schools never stopped struggling. And too many students are waiting, in vain, for their schools to change.

Jennifer Weber is a fellow at the Manhattan Institute.

City kids stuck in failing

IN NYC, THIS PASSES FOR EDUCATION



Failure factories

400,000+ children — 43% of the city's public school students — attend schools where the majority of students are failing math or ELA — or both

School type	District & charter failing schools	Students attending failing schools	All NYC K-12 students	% of students in failing schools
Elementary Schools	276	108,375	320,938	34%
Middle Schools	173	59,965	123,451	49%
K-8 Schools	73	37,145	150,649	25%
High Schools	297	157,178	252,277	62%
Other (G6-12, K-12)	87	46,716	103,011	45%
Total	**906**	**409,379**	**950,326**	**43%**

Source: NYC DOE state exam results, 2024-25. District and charter schools combined.

By CARL CAMPANILE

Welcome to New York's flunking factories.

Failure in the city's public education system has become "normalized" — and even bolstered by grade inflation and fixing — with nearly half of schools consistently failing their students, a bombshell new report found.

The sweeping analysis, conducted by the Success Academy Charter Schools network, found that in those 906 public schools, fewer than half of students passed math, reading or both, on state exams last year.

In total, a staggering 43% of the system's approximately 912,000 students are in these failing schools, according to the shocking report released Tuesday.

Of the 906 schools, a majority of students in 503 of them failed both math and reading.

About a third of the 906 schools have appeared on state "accountability" lists since 2012, and some have been designated as failures for decades, the analysis found.

The stinging indictment claims city and state policies have only worsened the situation by failing to address the scandal or trying to hide it.

'Normalized & obscured'

"These are not accidents. They are the product of a system that has chosen, year after year, to protect itself rather than serve its students," said the report, titled "By Any Honest Measure."

"Imagine a hospital where more than half of patients died from routine procedures. A fire department that failed to respond to more than half its calls. A municipal water utility that delivered contaminated water to more than half its residents, or air traffic controllers whose lack of oversight regularly resulted in massive casualties.

"No other public institution would be permitted to operate in this way."

But the level of failure in the nation's largest public school system "has been normalized — and, worse, systematically obscured."

Success Academy head, Eva Moskowitz, said the report marked the most extensive review to date of consistently low-performing schools.

The report accused policymakers and educators of rewarding failure by pumping more funds into low-performing schools with dwindling enrollment.

New York City spent $40 billion on public education in 2024 — $36,293 per pupil, double the national average of $17,619.

Lawmakers funnel more money into the failing schools, at a rate

schools while flunkies cover it up: report

Adobe Stock; Robert Miller

of more than $40,000 per student, the report found.

According to the analysis, 34% of elementary students attend failing schools, with that percentage going up to 49% for middle schoolers and 62% for high schoolers, based on test scores.

Many high school graduates are unprepared for college-level work and have to take remedial courses when enrolled in CUNY colleges, the report noted.

Meanwhile, the accountability system for students and teachers is a joke, the analysis charged.

The student grading policy measures effort, participation and attendance — but excludes performance on the state's standardized math and English exams.

Using state test scores as part of a student's grade was scrapped by the Panel for Educational Policy under then-Mayor Bill de Blasio.

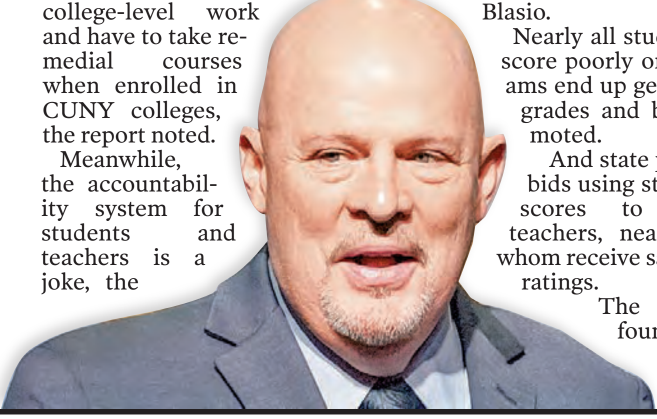
Nearly all students who score poorly on state exams end up getting good grades and being promoted.

And state policy forbids using student test scores to evaluate teachers, nearly all of whom receive satisfactory ratings.

The report found 98% of teachers were rated effective while 43% of students were failing, noting, "The math doesn't add up."

Albany has participated in downplaying or covering up failure, the report charges.

The state no longer releases its own comparisons on standardized test results by charter and traditional public schools, as the former perform better.



Plummetting enrollment

Lawmakers have also imposed a cap on the number of charters that are allowed to open.

The biggest wasteful folly: state lawmakers and Gov. Hochul's approval of the class size reduction law in New York City.

The legislation — passed at the behest of the powerful United Federation of Teachers and its president, Michael Mulgrew (left) — comes despite city public school enrollment dipping by 123,000 students since 2020, the report said.

Struggling and failing schools — which the city Department of Education has failed to consolidate or close — already have lower class sizes because families abandoned them, and the report said evidence doesn't support the mandate setting classroom caps.

Of the roughly 900 failing schools cited in the report, 167 were woefully under-enrolled.

Another budget drain is the city Department of Education's commitment to "propping up schools" with plummeting enrollment.

More than 800 schools out of the roughly 1,800 in the system have fewer than 400 students, while 241 had fewer than 200 students enrolled.

"Failing schools rob children of their futures," the report said. "Under-enrolled schools drain the budget for no return.

"The class size mandate will spend billions more on schools where class size is already low — and where it has demonstrably not helped."

Zo's plan ups cash for DOE

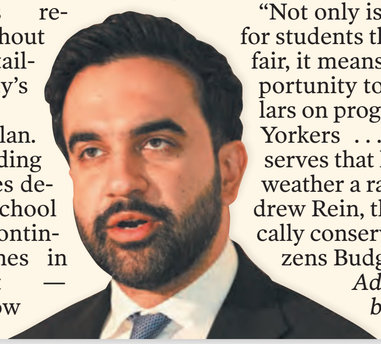
$680M more in budget

By CRAIG MCCARTHY

The Big Apple's beleaguered Department of Education quietly got even more money in this year's massive $126 billion budget — pushing public school funding to nearly a third of all planned city spending.

City documents show the DOE got $680 million more for its fiscal year 2027 budget than what Mayor Mamdani originally proposed earlier this year.

That brings the DOE's budget to an eye-watering $38.6 billion — an increase of almost $4 billion from last year, according to documents released without fanfare detailing the city's adopted spending plan.



The funding spike comes despite the school system's continued declines in enrollment — and a vow from Mamdani to get contract spending at the agency under control.

Some of the under-the-radar adds to the DOE budget included:

■ At least $400 million to keep funding flat in schools where enrollment is down.

■ About $100 million in school cleaning costs that were left off of Mamdani's executive budget proposal.

■ Some $42 million from City Council additions, including for social and emotional support programs, as well as art activities.

"Not only is budgeting to pay for students that don't exist unfair, it means you miss the opportunity to spend those dollars on programs to help New Yorkers ... or building reserves that help New Yorkers weather a rainy day," said Andrew Rein, the head of the fiscally conservative group, Citizens Budget Commission.

Additional reporting by Matt Troutman

‘Friendly fire’ vic

NYPD slug eyed in cop wounding

Christopher Sadowski

CHAOTIC SCENE: Probers believe an NYPD cop was hit by friendly fire during a confrontation with a gun-toting teen in Brooklyn.

By JOE MARINO, TINA MOORE and JORGE FITZ-GIBBON

Investigators believe that the veteran NYPD cop shot Sunday during a chaotic confrontation with a gun-toting teen in Brooklyn was struck by friendly fire, law-enforcement sources told The Post.

Detective Robert Karroll was hit in the back by a slug — and only saved from potentially deadly injuries by his bulletproof vest — around 4:15 a.m. when a deranged 18-year-old ran up on an unmarked police car in Crown Heights, authorities have said.

Karroll — a married dad of three who was 10 days from retirement — was in the vehicle along with three other officers, all of whom were in uniform, officials have said.

When the suspect flashed his gun in front of the officers, three of the four cops fired — missing the suspect but apparently hitting Karroll, sources said, citing a preliminary probe.

The bizarre set of events began to unfold around 4:05 a.m., when surveillance video captured the seemingly hyped-up armed teen chatting with four people outside a Nostrand Avenue deli.

Targets an Uber

The teen whipped out an SAR 9 mm handgun, and over the next 10 minutes, pointed it wildly at one of the men outside the deli, walked inside the store, came back out and shot at a passing Uber — his apparent target, according to sources. Neither the Uber driver nor their passenger was hit, sources said.

The teen then walked behind the cops’ unmarked SUV with his weapon visible, sources said.

He proceeded to go along the driver’s side, then in front of the SUV with his gun in his hand — prompting the cops to fire, sources said.

The suspect was not hit, but Karroll was struck in the back — saved by his police vest.

The cop car was riddled with bullets during the chaos.

A female cop also suffered minor injuries.

The unidentified gunman fled but was nabbed several blocks away, at Union Street and Rogers Avenue, after resisting arrest and being subdued with a Taser, officials said.

He was awaiting charges, sources said.

Karroll was released from the hospital hours later and was expected to fully recover, cops said.

The teen has no prior arrests in the Big Apple, but has at least one shoplifting charge in Essex County, NJ.

Mamdani, Hochul can’t spell hero

Mayor Mamdani embarrassingly botched the spelling of the veteran NYPD officer who was shot in the back this weekend — despite announcing he had just visited the father of three in the hospital.

Hizzoner misspelled Detective Robert Karroll’s last name three times in a social media post, wrongly spelling the veteran officer’s name as “Carroll.”

“Early this morning in Crown Heights, Detective Robert Carroll was shot in the line of duty. I visited Detective Carroll at the hospital today, and I’m grateful his bulletproof vest protected him from more serious injury. I’m keeping him and his loved ones in my thoughts as he recovers,” Mamdani posted on X Sunday afternoon.

“I’m thankful to Detective Carroll and every member of the NYPD working to keep New Yorkers safe through a busy holiday weekend,” Mamdani added.

Gov. Hochul also couldn’t be bothered to learn the correct spelling of the wounded officer’s name.

“Relieved to hear Detective Carroll is expected to make a full recovery. I’m keeping him, his family, and everyone at the NYPD in my thoughts today,” the Democrat posted.

Mamdani, who has previously called for defunding the police, recently blindsided the department and city lawmakers with an eleventh-hour move to ax some 600 planned new officer hires.

Weeks earlier, Mamdani had announced he’d hire 580 more officers — which angered democratic socialist allies because it broke a campaign promise to freeze the NYPD’s headcount at 35,000 cops.

The already-stretched-thin force faces a massive summer workload, with officers working 12-hour shifts due to World Cup tourism, Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce’s wedding, and the Independence Day holiday. *Patrick Reilly*

‘Feral’ children twist

Family members of the 16 “almost feral” children rescued from a feces-filled Ohio house of horrors had no idea there were that many kids living inside — until they saw the stunning headlines, a horrified relative revealed Monday.

Grandparents Gary Siders Sr., 73, and Christina “Lynn” Siders, 67, were arrested alongside their son, Gary “Bub” Siders Jr., 36, and his wife, Elizabeth Siders, 33, after authorities allegedly found the children, ages 1 to 18, living in squalor and isolation inside a cramped 12-by-12 room at the family’s Vinton County home last Tuesday.

Ronnie Fletcher, who’s married to one of the grandparents’ adult daughters, said he and his wife knew the younger Siders had a large family — but believed there were only around 10 children.

They only learned of the staggering 16 kids when news of their relatives’ arrests broke, he told local news outlet WOWK 13 — and said the revelation left the extended family “horrified” and “worried about the kids.”

“If we would have known that it was like that in that home, we would have done something about it — even if it was just to go there and take the kids ourselves or give them money,” he told the outlet.

Georgia Worrell

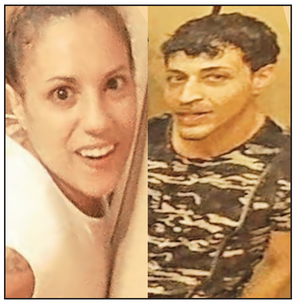
3 NYers die in heat wave

Three city residents died during last week’s extreme heat wave, City Hall said Monday.

They died in their homes over the weekend, when temperatures soared to near-triple digits, according to Mayor Mamdani’s rep, Joe Calvello.

Their names were not released.

At least 22 suspected heat-related deaths were reported in New Jersey, too, as part of a national death toll that surpassed two dozen, according to The Guardian. *Nicole Rosenthal*



LOOK FAMILIAR? Police released images of alleged attempted robbers.

Senior foils Bx. 'rob' try

A shameless trio tried to rob an elderly man outside his Bronx home Sunday morning, running away with his security camera when their attempt failed, police said.

When the victim refused to hand over his cash, the wannabe robbers followed him as he escaped to his nearby home, cops said.

After the elderly man made it inside and locked himself in, the trio started to bang on his door, police said.

When it became clear the 73-year-old wouldn't open up, the three goons then ripped his Ring security camera off the exterior wall and took off, authorities added.

Pictures released by cops show the alleged trio, which included an inked-up woman in a white shirt, a tattooed man with a baseball cap and a man in a camo T-shirt. *David DeTurris*

Midwest to get pounded

A torrential storm could pound eight states on Wednesday, according to the National Weather Service.

The phallic forecast predicts a cluster of thunderstorms, hail and heavy winds could come through the Upper Midwest, before finishing in the central Great Plains.

The weather system is expected to start in Minnesota and pass through Wisconsin.

The precipitation will swell in southern Minnesota and Iowa, potentially blowing wind and covering the region in hail, according to the forecast. *David DeTurris*

PLATNER 'RAPE'

BOMBSHELL: Jenny Racicot claims Graham Platner broke into her home and raped her, which he denies.

Ex's charge leaves campaign in serious jeopardy

By RYAN KING
and JOSH CHRISTENSON

An ex-girlfriend of scandal-scarred Graham Platner alleged that the Maine Senate hopeful broke into her home and raped her almost five years ago — sending his controversial campaign teetering on the edge of collapse as a growing list of top Dems are calling for him to drop out.

Maine resident Jenny Racicot came forward with the accusations to Politico, recalling the alleged rape in graphic detail and providing corroboration.

Racicot recalled how Platner entered her unlocked home one night in 2021 — after she texted him that she didn't want to see him and told him not to come over.

She said Platner was "very drunk and wouldn't take no for an answer" after telling him "No, don't."

"And, the look on his face and realizing what was happening, I just realized that, like, I am in a situation where there's no consent here," she explained to Politico of the alleged rape.

The two connected on Bumble in 2019 and had an on-again, off-again relationship until the alleged rape, according to Racicot's telling.

'Almost blackout'

Racicot claims Platner entered her home, came up the stairs, and got on top of her while she was on a couch. Platner allegedly got physical with her, and she repeatedly rebuffed him.

Then, she claims to have broken away from him while he seemed "almost blackout drunk," but Platner continued, and she retreated to her bedroom, according to her account. There, she alleged Platner had nonconsensual sex and ejaculated into her while she was not on birth control.

"I had recognized that he wasn't listening to me. It wasn't just that he wasn't hearing me or whatnot," she told CNN's Jake Tapper. "I don't think I was safe to physically fight back. I felt like complying for my safety was the least worst option."

After cleaning herself off, she claimed Platner had fallen asleep.

Racicot was briefly featured in last month's bombshell New York Times story on Platner, but her sexual assault accusation against him was not mentioned in that piece, which revealed accusations of misconduct from ex-girlfriend Lyndsey Fifield.

Asked if she was raped by Platner, Racicot told CNN: "By definition, yes, absolutely yes."

A chorus of prominent Democrats, including New York Sens. Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand, and Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, quickly rescinded their endorsements of Platner and urged him to exit the race.

Rep. Ro Khanna (D-Calif.), Sen. Ruben Gallego (D-Ariz.) and the Maine Democratic Party also called on Platner to drop out. House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY) called for him to "immediately withdraw."

In response to the alarming allegation, Platner said his campaign will take time "to reflect on the best path forward."

The accused abuser has a July 13 deadline to drop out for Democrats to easily replace him on the ballot to face GOP Sen. Susan Collins in November — in a state that is key to control of the Senate.

The Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee warned it won't invest in the Maine Senate race if Platner remains on the ballot.

"One of the reasons I didn't come forward sooner was, the huge moral conflict that I had between supporting his politics, but not supporting him as a person," Racicot told Politico. "I just want the truth out there. I just want people to have a whole scope of who he is as a person."

Platner vehemently denied the accusations as "troubling, serious, and false."

"Any accusation of non-consensual behavior is categorically false," he added.

No police report

"Regardless of the inaccuracy of the reporting, but mindful of the political reality it will inflict, we are taking the time to reflect on the best path forward for the state that I love, the people that I love, the movement I belong to, and the goal of defeating Susan Collins," Platner announced in a video.

Platner, his campaign, and political strategist Morris Katz were debating Monday evening whether to drop out, a source told The Post. Katz — who appeared alongside Mayor Mamdani leading up to the New York primary races — has been told to steer clear of Hizzoner until July 13, a source close to City Hall said.

Weeks after the alleged rape — after she had her period and was sure she wasn't pregnant — Racicot claims to have messaged Platner over Instagram, stressing that their encounter wasn't consensual. She wasn't able to recover those messages and claims she deleted all of her communications with Platner as part of an effort to move on.

She did not file a police report. Under Maine law, the statute of limitations on rape is 20 years.

But Racicot had emails with her therapist in which she recounted her communication with the media over the "sa/rape," explaining she wasn't ready to go public with them, according to Politico.

She also pointed the outlet to a man she dated after Platner, to whom she confided details of her experience with Platner.

Stars & gripes from the left

ISAAC SCHORR

THE professionally miserable wing of the American left is torn up over the righting of an egregious wrong at the World Cup.

During its Round of 32 matchup last week, the US national team watched in horror as star striker Folarin Balogun received a red card because the opposing player challenging him from behind failed to stay on his feet while the pair battled for the ball.

That would have sidelined Balogun for the all-important elimination match against Belgium — until Sunday, when FIFA delayed implementing the striker's suspension.

The subsequent moaning from the Belgians, who went on to beat the US, 4-1, was pathetic. The bellyaching from self-hating American malcontents, doubly so.

Ex-Obama aide Tommy Vietor professed to be "overjoyed" that Balogun would take the field — yet lamented that his reinstatement would "make the rest of the world feel like the tournament was rigged."

Husband from hell and fifth-place primary finisher George Conway called the episode "revolting" and that it might "end up tarnishing the team."

Richard Hanania deemed Bolgun's reinstatement "a depressing sign of how far we've fallen," comparing the Stars and Stripes to "a backwards, third world country."

Trump's 'ask'

Meanwhile, actual third-worldists like Mehdi Hasan sided with Hanania, calling on Balogun to "refuse to play" in protest of the "unfair" development.

Some of the teeth-gnashing can be chalked up to a particularly nasty strain of Trump Derangement Syndrome.

Trump called FIFA president Gianni Infantino to ask that the body give the matter a second look.

According to Axios' Marc Caputo, though, Trump made no "specific ask" and was told the matter was being "independently reviewed."

That's irrelevant to the Trump haters: "Even FIFA is engaged in Trump crime family corruption," former congressman Adam Kinzinger frothed.

It should come as no surprise that those who have allowed Trump's existence to warp their minds beyond recognition are upset that he may have played some role in securing this remedial action.

But the irrational hysterics are the fruit of the destructive, distinctly anti-American worldview of the ascendant progressive left.

No pride

Balogun never deserved the punishment doled out to him by a single referee — and FIFA itself, long dogged by allegations of bribery and similar sleaziness, has made other exceptions to allow certain red-card recipients, including Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo, to circumvent suspensions they were supposed to serve.

No worthwhile principle compels the functioning conscience to demand Balogun serve out the sentence for a crime he didn't commit. Yet the Blame America First crowd is demanding exactly that.

Because for the self-assured moral relativist, true north is neither what is just, nor what is in their country's best interest, but what is fashionable.

The question isn't "What is right?" but, "What will my brunch mates think?"

And what they think is whatever Howard Zinn and John Oliver told them to.

That's why they drooled over New York City Mayor Mamdani's unpatriotic assault on the adoptive nation to which he owes so much on the occasion of its 250th birthday.

That's why DNC Chairman Ken Martin compared the government of Iran, which massacred tens of thousands of its civilians in a matter of days earlier this year, to his own.

That's why fewer and fewer Democrats feel any pride at all in being an American.

But to everyone outside of their privileged, conformist bubble, they appear only to be degrading themselves in service to an ignoble cause.

Isaac Schorr is a columnist and former senior editor at Mediaite.

TRUMP'S

RED, WHITE & FEELING BLUE: Fans were dejected after the US' World Cup run came to an end Monday. Despite having his ban nixed, striker Folarin Balogun (right) was basically a nonfactor in a 4-1 loss to Belgium in the Round of 16.

By SAMUEL CHAMBERLAIN
and EMILY GOODIN

WASHINGTON — President Trump revealed Monday that he asked FIFA supremo Gianni Infantino to review US striker Folarin Balogun's red card, which would have kept him out of last night's elimination match against Belgium — with Trump admitting, "I didn't think it was a foul."

"I didn't tell [Infantino] what to do," the president responded to a Post reporter's question in the Oval Office. "I can't tell him what to do, but — and I don't believe he made the decision. I think it was a committee that made the decision, and they made the right decision — because No. 1, it wasn't a foul, and you want to see a game with your best players."

FIFA shocked the world Sunday by announcing that Balogun's one-match ban — typically an automatic consequence of any red card — would be suspended for up to one year, clearing the US star to play in the 4-1 loss to Belgium that knocked the US out of the World Cup.

Legal process

"I asked for a review because I didn't think it was a foul, and you know, again, I'm good at this stuff," Trump said. "I thought it was two great athletes that crashed into each other and got entangled."

In a statement just before noon Monday, Infantino confirmed: "I regularly discuss matters related to the FIFA World Cup with the President of the United States, and on this matter, I did receive a call from President Donald Trump . . . During our conversation, I explained that there was an ongoing legal process involving FIFA's independent judicial bodies and that the case would be decided in due course by the competent bodies. That is how FIFA's system works, and it is a principle that I will always uphold."

Slow-mo replay

The Brooklyn-born Balogun, who plays professionally for AS Monaco in France's Ligue 1, was sent off by Brazilian referee Raphael Claus in the second half of the USA's 2-0 win over Bosnia and Herzegovina in the round of 32 last Wednesday.

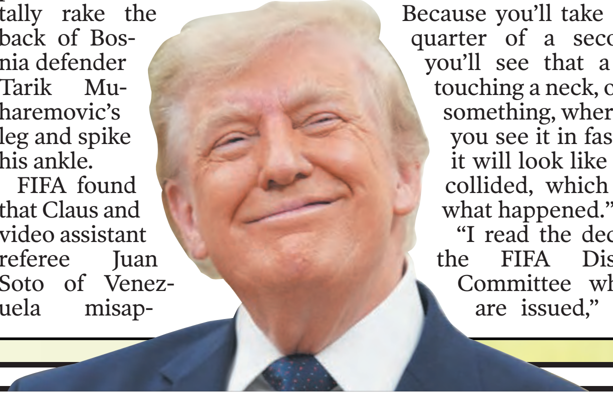
Claus ruled, after video review, that Balogun committed a red card offense after the striker appeared to accidentally rake the back of Bosnia defender Tarik Muharemovic's leg and spike his ankle.

FIFA found that Claus and video assistant referee Juan Soto of Venezuela misapplied protocols by using slow motion to determine the severity of the foul.

The referee initially ruled that Muharemovic fouled Balogun before being called to the video monitor.

"They say they don't show them in slow motion," Trump said, "because it's so different. Because you'll take one little quarter of a second, and you'll see that a hand is touching a neck, or you see something, whereas when you see it in fast motion, it will look like two guys collided, which is really what happened."

"I read the decisions of the FIFA Disciplinary Committee when they are issued," Infantino



PITCH TO FIFA

Asked for review of Balogun's red card

insisted Monday. "Sometimes I am surprised by them. Sometimes I agree with them, and sometimes I disagree. What I always do, however, is respect those decisions and the autonomy of the bodies that make them."

The bombshell decision stoked outrage from the Union of European Football Associations, which accused FIFA of "unprecedented, incomprehensible and unjustifiable" move to allow Balogun to play Monday.

UEFA said soccer relies on an agreed-upon set of rules and that the automatic suspension is not a "discretionary option and does not require the decision of a competent body to be enacted."

England legend Wayne Rooney, meanwhile, called the decision an "absolute disgrace."

"Infantino should be ashamed of this because I think for the sportsmanship of this game is in question here," Rooney said Sunday. "If I'm the USA's opponent, I'd be absolutely fuming. I think it's wrong in every way. I think it's an absolute disgrace."

Trump also questioned the integrity of Claus, who was accused of match-fixing and giving out "irregular red cards" in 2023, though an investigation turned up no evidence of wrongdoing.

"These were two great athletes that got tangled up, and this referee who delivers . . . little bit suspect?" he said. "Check his past. I don't want to say that, because I don't like to create controversy. Very suspect."

Approximately seven hours before the match kicked off in Seattle, FIFA denied the Royal Belgian Football Association's appeal of its Balogun ruling, finding the RBFA was "not a party to the proceedings and, as such, has no standing to appeal the decision."

RBFA said it had not received an explanation for FIFA's decision, accusing the governing body of breaching its own regulations.

Trump said it would have "stained this incredible game" had Balogun not been able to play.

FIFA via Getty Images; AP Photo/Mark Schiefelbein; AP Photo/Sam Hodde

X/Captain Mark Kelly

Dem sen. kicked for wearing Mex. garb

WASHINGTON — The internet is giving him a red card.

Sen. Mark Kelly (D-Ariz.) was ruthlessly skewered on social media for donning a Mexico jersey during a watch party in Tucson for the country's big World Cup game against England.

"Lots of people out in Tucson to watch Mexico take on England. Tucson and La Rosa sure know how to do the World Cup!" Kelly posted on X with images of himself in a Mexico jersey (above).

Kelly, whose state shares a border with Mexico, has cultivated buzz that he may be eyeing a run for the presidency in 2028, given that he represents a critical swing state. The US, Mexico and Canada have been jointly hosting the World Cup this year.

Mexico ultimately suffered a 3-2 loss to England, but conservative critics quickly ripped him for his wardrobe choice.

"Modern Democratic Party: wear another country's jersey and post a photo of yourself taking a photo of yourself," conservative pundit Scott Jennings jabbed on X.

"Surprised you weren't wearing an Iran jersey, senator," Outkick founder Clay Travis swiped.

"This pandering loser doesn't understand the conviviality of the World Cup. If he wore a USA jersey proudly, the Mexican fans would embrace him," former investment banker John LeFevre posted on X.

The Post reached out to Kelly's office for comment. *Ryan King*

Migrant crush *did* drive up housing prices

LYDIA MOYNIHAN

MAYOR Mamdani won New York City's mayoral race on the issue of affordability — an issue Democrats have spent years insisting they alone can solve.

But the party's policies helped create the very conditions that pushed housing costs higher, according to a new working paper from the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas.

According to the research, which is part of a preliminary draft and, the authors note, does not necessarily reflect the views of the Federal Reserve System, America's rising housing costs were driven in part by a massive wave of unauthorized immigration during the Biden administration from 2021 to 2024.

The surge, which the paper estimates at around 7 million entrants during that period, "acted simultaneously as a demand shock to local housing markets, boosting rents given relatively inelastic short-run housing supply" and is responsible for 30% of home price growth and 20% of rent increases.

In other words: When there is more demand but supply stays constant, costs go up.

While that may be obvious to anyone with even the most tenuous grasp of basic economics, it is an important data point — albeit one that can get you labeled as xenophobic and anti-immigrant.

Lambasted by media

Back in 2024, when Donald Trump told a rally that, "Immigration is driving housing costs through the roof," and JD Vance noted, "You have got housing that is totally unaffordable because we brought in millions of illegal immigrants to compete with Americans for scarce homes," they were mercilessly fact-checked and accused of scapegoating immigrants.

The Washington Post reported in October 2024, "Vance says immigrants caused a housing shortage. Economists disagree."

The New York Times reported the same month that Trump and Vance were "blaming immigrants for the housing crisis" but "most economists disagree."

Democrats have refused to acknowledge reality and instead pushed policies that make the problem worse: more immigration (increasing demand) and more red tape (limiting supply).

Here in New York City, where Mamdani won his bid for mayor in large part because of a promise to make housing more affordable, his agenda undermines that vow.

He has embraced New York's sanctuary-city status, pushed for hundreds of millions more dollars in immigrant legal-defense funding and vowed that the city will "always welcome immigrants."

And his rent freeze doesn't actually address the housing affordability problem for most New Yorkers.

Similarly, under Biden, the Federal Housing Finance Agency expanded eligibility for non-permanent residents to get inexpensive mortgages at a time when more Americans were struggling.

HUD expanded access to federally backed mortgages to non-permanent residents, including DACA recipients and immigrants with H-1Bs and green cards. Those programs allowed buyers with lower credit scores and smaller down payments (as little as 3.5% down) access to mortgages.

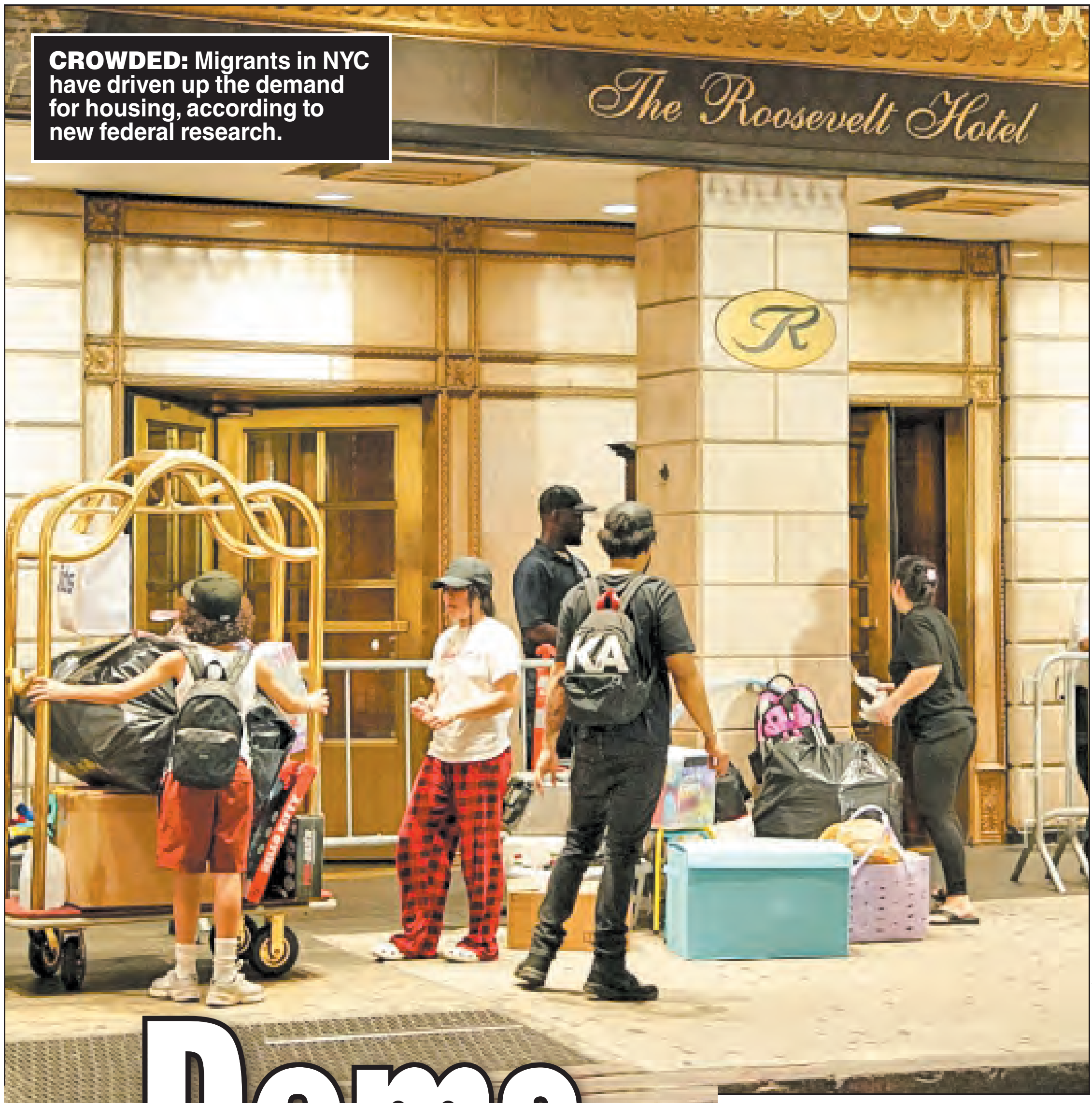
Gen Z's plight

All of this is a crushing reality for young Americans in particular. Among those in Gen Z, 67% are struggling with housing costs and 84% are delaying marriage, children or other major life milestones because of it.

It's no coincidence that a growing percentage of that generation is toying with socialism (62% have a favorable view).

While I'm sympathetic to their plight, the very policies they're embracing will only exacerbate the problem.

Democrats have learned how to talk about the affordability crisis, but they don't have solutions actually grounded in economics.



CROWDED: Migrants in NYC have driven up the demand for housing, according to new federal research.

Christopher Sadowski

Dems flunked Econ 101

High-rise pelted by fireworks

A luxury Brooklyn high-rise was pelted with illegal fireworks July 4 — damaging its windows, showering onlookers with sparks and sending rooftop party-goers fleeing, fuming tenants told The Post.

No one was seriously hurt as the rogue pyrotechnics were launched at the tony apartment tower from the street, but residents in the trendy Bushwick neighborhood said they missed their coveted local skyline views during the spectacular Macy's Fourth of July Fireworks show — to run for cover to avoid getting hit with the stray blasts.

"The fireworks were pelting the windows — it sounded like hail," resident Eric Dolny told The Post.

He said the rockets were launched just after sundown directly in front of the swanky, 18-story, newly built Cedar Tower, where one-bedrooms run about $3,500 a month.

"It was definitely jarring," the 34-year-old said.

"They were bursting in front of our window."

A 28-year-old software engineer said she was "hit in the chest" by a burst while hosting about a dozen friends in her 12th-floor apartment.

*Sofia Poznansky
and Nicole Rosenthal*

Hosp cop saves life

A Bronx hospital cop is being hailed a hero for jumping into life-saving action during a routine parking-lot patrol when a driver with a convulsing passenger wildly barreled into an ambulance bay.

Sgt. Saira Flores, an eight-year veteran of North Central Bronx Hospital in Norwood, on Jan. 5 saw the motorist's passenger "convulsing — his eyes were rolling back, and he was going back and forth in the car," noting the signs of a drug overdose.

The sergeant quickly administered a dose of department-issued Narcan to the man and radioed the emergency room to send medical staff. *Nicole Rosenthal*

CHARLIE'S WIDOW FACES 'ASSASSIN'

By JARED DOWNING

Erika Kirk fled a Utah courtroom Monday to avoid watching graphic footage of the murder of her tragic husband, Turning Point USA founder Charlie Kirk.

The stricken mother of two made her swift exit right before prosecutors played three videos showing the gruesome moment Kirk, 31, was fatally shot in the neck during an event on the campus of at Utah Valley University in September.

Kirk's accused assassin, Tyler Robinson, meanwhile, smiled at various times during the hearing while talking to one of his lawyers.

Monday — day one of a five-day hearing meant to lay out the evidence against Robinson ahead of trial — was Erika's first time coming face to face with the man accused of killing her conservative leading-light husband.

The Turning Point CEO, who took over leadership of Charlie's organization, held hands with her mother-in-law, Kathryn, in the courtroom.

Also in the courtroom were Charlie's close pals First Son Donald Trump Jr., with wife Bettina Anderson, and conservative activist Jack Posobiec.

'Immense grief'

In a statement ahead of the hearing, Erika emphasized how severe her pain remains.

"We remain deeply grateful for the support, prayers, and kindness we have received. This outpouring has sustained us during the darkest days of our lives," it said.

"Out of respect for the judicial process, we will not be commenting further at this time. We ask for continued privacy as we navigate this process and immense grief," the heartbroken family concluded.

Robinson's family sat near a line of uniformed officers.

The suspect — who appeared in a gray suit and shackled at the wrists — otherwise seemed stoic, including as prosecutors displayed photos of the campus and rooftop from which he allegedly shot Kirk with a rifle.

Robinson, 23, also occasionally took notes as his camp questioned witnesses during the proceeding, which is being held so prosecutors can try to prove to the judge they have enough evidence to put him on trial. Robinson faces the death penalty if tried and convicted.

The videos played Monday in court were barred from media broadcast, with Robinson's lawyers arguing that their depictions in "stark relief" of Kirk's death could sway potential jurors.

Videos already posted online shortly after Kirk was murdered in front of thousands of horrified fans showed blood gushing from his neck when he was hit with a round fired from a .30-06 caliber hunting rifle from 200 yards away.

He then slumped over before members of his security team rushed him to the hospital, where he was declared dead.

It appeared at least one of the videos shown in court Monday may be among those already circulated online.

Kirk's mother, Kathryn, held a tissue pack and bowed her head as she listened to the testimony, Fox 13 reported from the courtroom.

Judge Tony Graf emphasized that attendees may return to court once they had left, when the court reconvened.

Objections

Security was on high alert for the proceeding, with a half-dozen officers in SWAT gear inside the courthouse and more agents positioned on the roof, according to Fox 13.

Robinson's defense had moved to block media cameras from the courtroom, arguing that up-to-the-minute coverage would sway the public — and potential jurors — against their client before the trial even began.

His lawyers also objected to every single piece of evidence introduced. They only won on a single video — which appeared to have been edited. The judge told prosecutors to submit an unedited version of the footage for the court to review.

GRUESOME: Erika Kirk leaves a Utah court Monday as a video played of husband Charlie's fatal shooting allegedly by Tyler Robinson. Also in attendance were parents Kathryn and Robert Kirk (below).

Reuters; East Idaho News; Getty Images

Attempt to quash whacko theories

Erika Kirk and prosecutors have fought to keep the trial of Charlie's alleged assassin, Tyler Robinson, as open as possible — in an attempt to quell sick conspiracy theories about the Turning Point USA founder's murder.

Monday was the first of five days of hearings for prosecutors to present evidence against Robinson — a Utah legal procedure that can be used in lieu of a grand jury indictment.

Robinson's defense has pushed to keep cameras and details of bombshell evidence out of court to avoid swaying potential jurors against him.

The judge has split the difference — allowing cameras in court but prohibiting videos of Kirk's September murder at Utah Valley University and other evidence exhibits from being broadcast.

But whacko speculators still claim the death of the Turning Point USA founder was an inside job.

Fake claims that Kirk died at the behest of Israel, the Trump administration or other high-level interlopers have continued to circulate — some of which are led by self-styled Kirk confidant Candace Owens.

TPUSA spokesperson Andrew Kolvet sought to disavow Owens on Monday.

"Candace, you and Charlie were not friends. He managed you. He kept things light and polite so you wouldn't turn on the org," Kolvet posted to X on Monday as Utah prosecutors laid out evidence against Robinson.

"Show me any proof of genuine friendship from the last 12 months of his life? From the last 18 months? From the last 24 months? Not some 2018 text . . . This is your central, foundational lie."

The hearing will continue through this week, during which prosecutors are expected to show video testimony from Robinson's lover Lance Twiggs.

Jared Downing

Strong-'arming' NATO: Don plan

By STEVEN NELSON

WASHINGTON — One year after President Trump was dubbed "Daddy" by NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte at the annual summit of the Atlantic alliance, the chief executive is returning with plans for billions in arms deals meant to push Europe to boost military spending — and show that "Daddy isn't going anywhere."

Trump will arrive Tuesday for the two-day gathering in Ankara, Turkey, just three months after saying he was "absolutely without question" considering withdrawing from NATO in retribution for allies refusing US planes and ships access to key facilities during the Iran war.

The president chalked up his attendance to his fondness for Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, but administration officials expect Trump to use the summit to recommit to America's role leading the 77-year-old bloc, even if he has to play disciplinarian.

"The takeaway from last year's NATO conference was 'Daddy's Home,' and after this week's visit, NATO countries will be forced to concede, 'Daddy isn't going anywhere,'" said Taylor Budowich, a close Trump adviser and former White House deputy chief of staff.

"President Trump has rebuilt NATO in his image and the body will be leveraged to serve the interests of the West, and not the interests of the world in spite of the West."

A joint commitment by NATO leaders to spend 5% of their GDP on defense by 2035, agreed to last year at Trump's urging, calls for 3.5% to go toward core military spending with 1.5% set aside for broader projects that "protect our critical infrastructure, defend our networks, ensure our civil preparedness and resilience, unleash innovation, and strengthen our defense industrial base."

An administration official told reporters Sunday that "we're going to have billions of dollars in [US arms sales] announcements on the sidelines of the summit."

Bibi: Deny Turkey F-35s

WASHINGTON — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu publicly asked President Trump Monday not to send advanced F-35 fighter jets to Turkey, warning the shipment would "upset the power balance" in the region.

One of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's goals heading into this week's NATO summit is to get his country readmitted into the F-35 program, despite bipartisan resistance in Washington.

"Turkey is . . . governed by a man who calls openly for the annihilation of Israel," Netanyahu told "Fox & Friends." *Ryan King*

Prez to allies: Pay up

President Trump is warning NATO allies against "playing funny math" with their defense spending as he meets with leaders of the military bloc Tuesday — and some of America's most powerful allies are looking to be the biggest laggards.

NATO has gotten its act together on defense spending since Trump's first term — with every country hitting the 2% threshold in 2025, at least on paper. That's up from just six of the 32 members by the end of his first term.

But the United Kingdom, France, Italy and Spain — four of the five biggest European members of NATO — are all stalling on their promises to shell out more for military hardware and personnel.

NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte is likely to insist at this week's meeting that the alliance members are on route to fulfill last year's agreement that all nations boost their defense spending to 5% of their GDP by 2030 — but the reality shows several of NATO's largest economies are far from reaching that goal.

"These nations don't feel a strong urgency about their national security," Jerry McGinn, director of the CSIS think tank's Center for the Industrial Base, told The Post. *Ronny Reyes, Marisa Schultz, with Wires*

RUSSIA'S

ATRO-CITY: A frantic mother shields her child (above left) from the horrifying scene Monday after Russian missile and drone attacks pounded residential buildings in Kyiv, leaving at least 21 civilians dead and rescuers searching the rubble for victims.

By GEORGIA WORRELL

Heart-wrenching images captured the horrific aftermath of Russia's missile and drone barrage on Kyiv early Monday that killed at least 21 civilians — as first responders dug for bodies in mountains of rubble for victims.

Other chilling photos from the Ukrainian capital showed massive fires ripping through apartment buildings and petrified families scrambling to rescue children from the wreckage.

One particularly haunting image shows a devastated mother clutching her young daughter to her chest while shielding her eyes in a debris-strewn street after one of Moscow's missiles slammed into their family's building.

The onslaught over the last several days underscored Kyiv's desperate need for American-made Patriot interceptors, one of the few anti-air weapons that can stop Russia's ballistic missiles. Kyiv's stores of Patriots are critically low, leaving Ukraine's cites vulnerable, Ukraine said.

Emergency crews were seen combing through the rubble, collapsed concrete and twisted metal, searching for survivors among buildings whose upper floors had been blown apart.

"These are residential buildings. Places where people slept and lived their ordinary lives," Tymur Tkachenko, head of Kyiv's City Military Administration, wrote on Telegram Monday.

Chilling video appeared to show human remains trapped beneath slabs of concrete inside one demolished building, where rescuers had already pulled an entire family — two parents and their child — from the rubble on Monday, according to Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha.

Zel to meet Trump

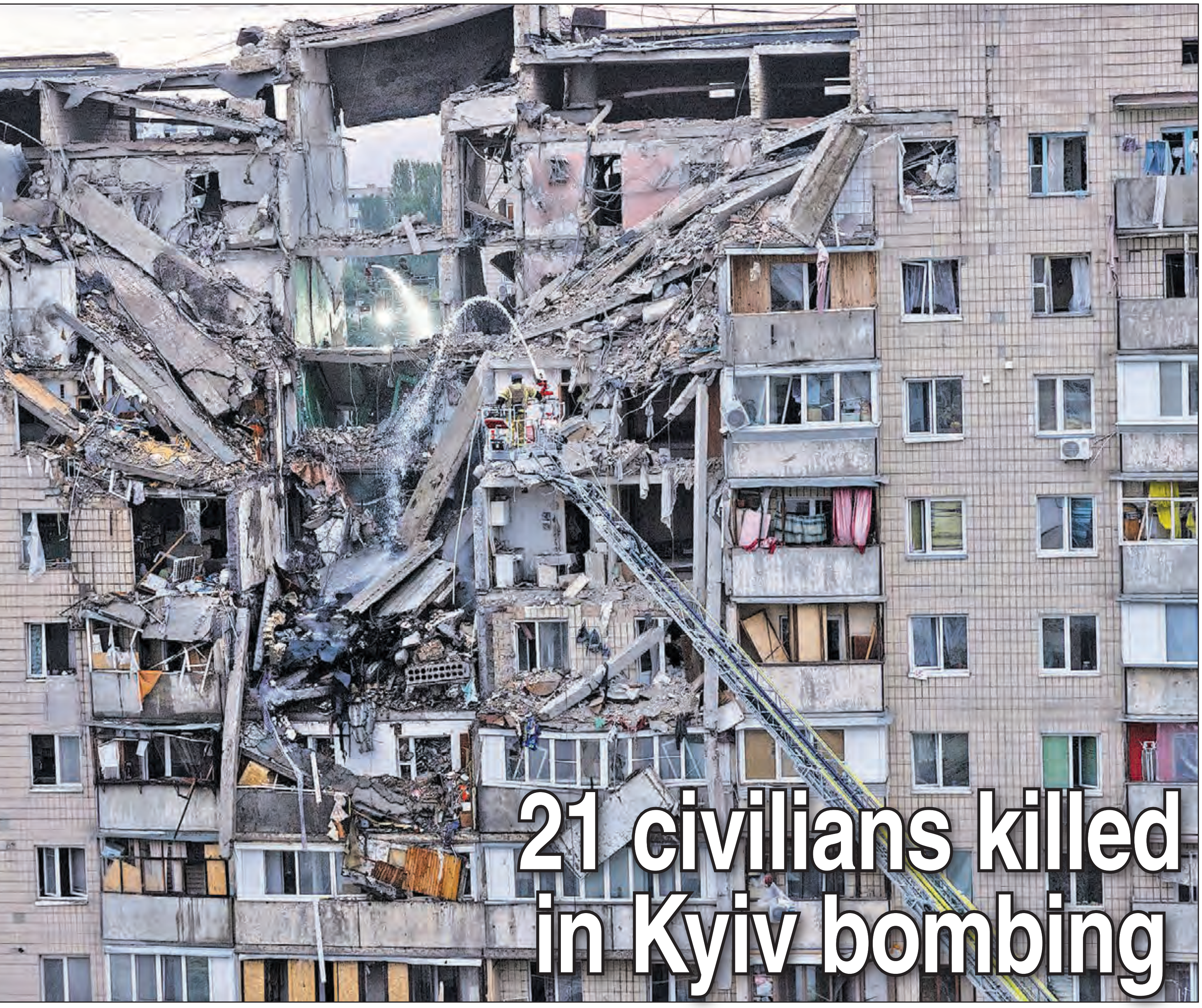
The latest attack — which damaged roughly 30 buildings across Kyiv and left at least 56 people injured, according to Ukrainian authorities — came just days after another Russian strike killed 31 people in the capital, the deadliest attack on the city so far this year.

The barrage also unfolded just hours after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky warned that another large-scale attack was imminent — and on the eve of a NATO summit, where he is expected to meet with President Trump about a renewed push for peace.

The Ukrainian military's inability to shoot down any of the 23 missiles fired at Kyiv on Monday — and just four of the 49 missiles launched at the city by Russia so far in July — underscores the country's critical shortage of American-made Patriot ground-to-air interceptors.

Zelensky has repeatedly pleaded with allies for more Pa-

BRUTAL BARRAGE



Getty Images

21 civilians killed in Kyiv bombing

triot missiles — the only weapon in Ukraine's arsenal that can take out Russia's high-speed ballistic missiles.

He urged NATO members to make "strong decisions" regarding Ukraine's air defense capabilities during the summit, which will kick off in Ankara, Turkey, on Tuesday.

"It is critically important that the world — first and foremost the United States and our European partners — come out of the NATO Summit in Ankara with strong decisions in support of our air defense, and thus the protection of ordinary people's lives," Zelensky wrote on X.

Patriots requested

"As long as Patriot missiles sit in our allies' stockpiles, Russia is only encouraged to keep 'destroying 'vanquishing' residential buildings. The U.S. and Europe have the power to stop this terror," he continued.

Ukraine's air force said it intercepted 37 other missiles fired at areas surrounding Kyiv and more than 90% of the 351 drones launched during Monday's strike, while Russia's Defense Ministry boasted that it had carried out the "massive" strike.

Moscow has stepped up strikes on Kyiv in retaliation for Ukraine's recent long-range drone strikes.

Russia said it shot down more than 500 Ukrainian drones.

Kyiv's military said on Monday it had struck three Russian oil refineries — including the country's largest facility in Omsk, more than 1,500 miles away — as well as two of the Kremlin's "shadow fleet" vessels in the Sea of Azov.

More than 16,000 Ukrainians have been killed in the war so far, according to the United Nations.

Ukraine's use of low-cost drones — including long-range models that can strike deep into Russia — has changed the momentum in the war and slowed Putin's military advance to a near halt.

With Wires

Staying defensive key for Ukr.: JD

WASHINGTON — Vice President JD Vance claimed Monday the White House helped slam the brakes on Russia's offensive by urging Ukraine to play defense — as European leaders back Kyiv's intensified efforts to strike deep inside Russia.

"The Russians, they're paying a lot for every square kilometer they get. And I think that's because the United States and NATO have encouraged Ukraine to be more focused on defense — and that's proven effective," he told the Times of London.

Instead of launching counteroffensives into Russia-occupied Ukrainian land, Vance said "the Trump administration has leaned into" Ukrainians being "maximally defensive."

"It's allowed Ukraine to exploit a little bit more of their tactical advantage," he said. "Frankly, the Russians are in a place right now where the amount that they can get through continued [Russian] offensive operations is vanishingly small — and getting close to zero.

"That very well may create the space that we need to bring this thing to a close," he added.

President Trump echoed the optimism on Monday.

"President Putin wants it to end, I will tell you that very strongly," he said, adding that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky also wants it to end "now."

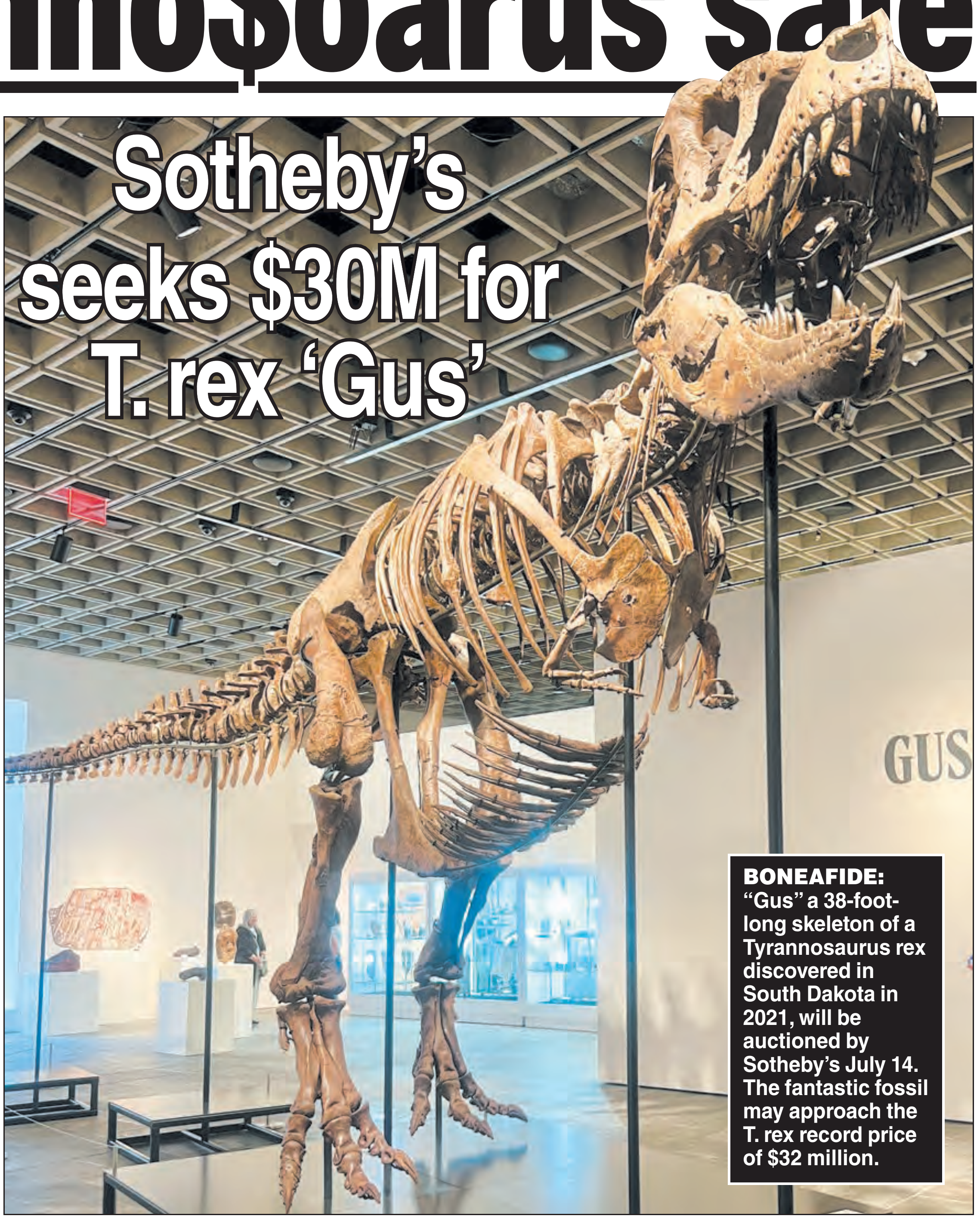
Ukrainian ambassador Olha Stefanishyna told The Post that Kyiv is grateful that Washington is seeing the state of the conflict through clear eyes, but was unaware of efforts to discourage Kyiv from going on the offensive.

"We appreciate the public outreach related to the real situation on the ground," she said.

Caitlin Doornbos

Tyranno$oarus sale

By ZOE HUSSAIN
and STEVE CUOZZO



Sotheby's seeks $30M for T. rex 'Gus'

BONEAFIDE: "Gus" a 38-foot-long skeleton of a Tyrannosaurus rex discovered in South Dakota in 2021, will be auctioned by Sotheby's July 14. The fantastic fossil may approach the T. rex record price of $32 million.

Steve Cuozzo

A towering piece of prehistoric history is headed to Sotheby's auction block later this month for a hefty price.

Sotheby's will auction off "Gus," a roughly 67-million-year-old Tyrannosaurus rex skeleton, on July 14. It is expected to fetch between $20 million and $30 million.

Gus, who is among the largest T. rexes ever unearthed, has a body length of approximately 38 feet, a skull length of 54 inches, and a femur length of 50.39 inches, according to Sotheby's.

The well-preserved, display-ready skeleton was excavated in Harding County, SD, between 2021 and 2023.

For buyers with slightly smaller budgets, the auction house is also offering a T. rex tooth from a different specimen, estimated to sell at a bargain-basement price of $40,000 to $60,000.

The fossilized tooth is currently on display next to the hostess stand inside Sotheby's Madison Avenue restaurant, Marcel, as part of their latest strategy to showcase high-value items before they are auctioned off.

History on menu

About 15 auction pieces are placed throughout the luxe eatery in a rotating display ahead of each sale, offering diners a chance to eat alongside the artifacts.

The art displays are a bold marketing stroke at Sotheby's, the world's largest auction house with over $5 billion in annual sales at locations around the world.

The tooth also will be auctioned off July 14 at Sotheby's natural history event, which will begin at 10 a.m.

In 2020, Christie's sold a 67-million-year-old T. rex named Stan for close to $32 million, shattering an estimated auction price of $8 million.

That price was almost quadruple the record set in 1997, when Sotheby's got $8.4 million for a T. rex named Sue.

Gus is could bring in even more dough since the latest dino is one of the most complete T. rex skeletons ever found.

Gus is more complete than both Stan and Sue, which were confirmed to be more than 60% complete, Artnet reported.

Family's second shooting

A 6-year-old boy whose father was fatally shot before he was born took a bullet to the chest during a Saturday mass shooting on Coney Island, and can't understand why someone would hurt him, his mother said Monday.

He was one of eight people, including four youngsters, wounded when gunfire shattered an annual family cookout filled with kids that began with "nothing but good vibes," according to cops and the victim's mother, Ineisha Greene, 27, of The Bronx.

"My son just keeps saying that somebody shot him. But he's only 6," she told The Post by phone.

Gun violence is not new to the family: The wounded boy never got to meet his father, who was killed in The Bronx while Greene was pregnant with him in 2019, she said.

Sunday's violence in Brooklyn apparently stemmed from gang retaliation in the area, authorities said.

While the child's injuries were non-life-threatening, he is still recovering alongside his wounded uncle, 14, Greene said.

The 7- and 12-year-old boys also shot are recovering at other hospitals are Greene's cousins, she said.

No arrests had been made by Monday, police said.

Amanda Woods

Whale sinks NJ fire boat

A New Jersey fire rescue boat was sunk in a "harrowing" freak accident involving a whale, sending the whole crew overboard and in need of rescue themselves while the vessel was returning from New York Harbor's Fourth of July celebrations.

Carteret Fire Department Marine Unit 2 was coming back from a security detail during America's 250th anniversary celebrations near the Statue of Liberty at around 4:30 p.m. when a whale breached the surface directly underneath the boat, striking its stern, according to the firefighters and Carteret Mayor Dan Reiman. *David DeTurris.*

Jewel heist at France's Lalique museum

Millions of dollars' worth of jewelry was stolen by a crew of burglars at the museum of French luxury glassmaker Lalique in a brazen early-morning theft, just months after the infamous jewel heist at the Louvre in Paris.

The gang of masked thieves broke into the museum in Wingen-sur-Moder in northeastern France at around 5:30 a.m. Sunday, a source told Agence France-Presse.

Roughly 20 pieces of jewelry were snatched from the museum after the gang of burglars headed for the jewelry room and smashed open six display cases, according to CBS and France24.

"The loss is currently being assessed but could amount to several million euros, likely close to 4 million [over $4.5 million]," the source told the AFP.

"An alarm went off but by the time the security company had completed its checks, it was a cleaning lady who arrived first on the scene and called the police," the source added.

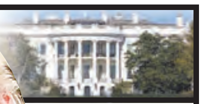
A notice posted to the museum's website said it will be "closed for several days" following "a burglary."

The museum is dedicated to René Lalique, a French jeweler and glassmaker of the Art Nouveau and Art Deco periods.

The building, which opened in 2011 near the company's factory, features over 650 "exceptional works" of jewelry, crystal, and perfume bottles.

Investigators are now reviewing security footage at the Lalique Museum.

Zoe Hussain



Kids $aved by the bell

AFP via Getty Images

WASHINGTON — President Trump rang the opening bell for the New York Stock Exchange and Nasdaq in the Oval Office on Monday to mark the launch of his administration's tax-advantaged accounts for kids, with the commander in chief vowing "to make young children, born with no money in many cases, rich."

Trump was joined in the Oval Office by corporate executives who have contributed to the funds, as well as a group of nine children who jumped up and cheered as the president pulled on a rope to signal the start of Wall Street's trading day.

Monday marked the second time a sitting president has rung the opening bell of the NYSE. Ronald Reagan was the first in 1985.

Nearly 6 million Americans have signed up for Trump Savings Accounts, which are open to any child under the age of 18. An estimated 1.4 million kids born between Jan. 1, 2025, and Dec. 31, 2028, have qualified for an additional $1,000 in seed money.

The cash can be invested via index funds or exchange-traded funds that mainly contain stock in US companies.

The youngsters were patient during 90 minutes of remarks and Trump taking questions from the media, though one child whispered to a reporter, "When is this over?" about halfway through. One young boy eventually drifted off to sleep.

Jack Christenson and Emily Goodin

Dell surges on Don plug

President Trump told Americans to "go out and buy a Dell computer" on Monday — sending shares of the Texas-based tech giant soaring as much as 7.8% before closing up 4.4%.

Dell shares shot up after the president praised founder Michael Dell and his wife, Susan, during a launch event for Trump Accounts, the savings accounts that the billionaire couple has prominently backed.

The Dells have pledged more than $6 billion to the initiative, launched July 4.

Trump's investment accounts bought between $1 million and $5 million of Dell stock in February.

The Trump Organization previously said several independent financial institutions manage the commander in chief's investments. *Ariel Zilber*

BRANDER IN CHIEF

Trump officially stamps name & likeness

By ALLY GOELZ

He's leaving a lasting impression.

From passports to cryptocurrency, President Trump has branded his face, name and signature on an array of commemoratives for America's 250th birthday and his legacy-building initiatives.

The Post has compiled a list of Trump's branding nationwide.

US PASSPORTS

On June 26, Trump unveiled a special edition passport for America's 250th, featuring a portrait of the president standing over the Oval Office's Resolute Desk, with the Declaration of Independence text behind it. It marks the first time a living president has been featured on a US passport.

There is no extra fee to obtain the passport. However, only 25,000 to 30,000 copies will be released, available solely at the Washington Passport Agency starting July 6.

TRUMP GOLD COIN

In March, the US Commission of Fine Arts voted unanimously to approve a design with Trump on a 24-karat gold coin. While it's against federal law to allow a living president to appear on US currency, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent has the authority to mint and issue proof gold coins.

SOCIAL SECURITY CARDS

Babies born between July 2 and the end of the year will receive a Social Security card with "Freedom 250" branding. Although it's not Trump's face or signature on it, Freedom 250 is a Trump-backed public-private organization, while America 250 is the congressional nonprofit established 10 years ago to organize events.

$100 BILL

On Friday, Trump posted an image of a $100 bill with his signature on it. This comes months after the Treasury Department announced that a sitting president's signature can be featured on US paper currency.

TRUMP AIRPORT

In February, the Florida Legislature approved a bill to rename the Palm Beach International Airport to President Donald J. Trump International Airport. The county airport director says federal authorities will update the name July 9.

TRUMP GOLD CARD

Trump announced a new visa program in February 2025 that offered expedited permanent US residency to applicants who pay a $15,000 processing fee and donate a $1 million financial gift to the government. Only one gold card visa had been approved as of late April.

TRUMPRx

In February, Trump announced TrumpRX, a website that provides coupons to redeem in pharmacies for discounts on more than 800 prescription medications.

TRUMP KENNEDY CENTER

In December, the Kennedy Center's board voted to change its name to the "Trump Kennedy Center." The outside facade was updated in December. But the signage was taken down in June after a federal judge ruled that adding his name to a congressionally designated memorial was illegal.

Illness grows on UES

23 Legionnaires'

By MATTHEW FISCHETTI
and HANNAH FIERICK

Over 20 people have been sickened by Legionnaires' disease in the ongoing outbreak on the Upper East Side — including more than a dozen currently hospitalized, according to city health officials.

The Department of Health said 23 people tested positive for the pneumonia-like illness, after previously reporting 14 cases on Sunday — a nearly sevenfold increase from when the first two diagnoses were announced July 2.

Of the 23 infected, 17 people have landed in the hospital, according to the DOH.

Some of the patients are in critical condition and in the intensive care unit, Health Commissioner Dr. Alister Martin told WABC-TV.

"Luckily, we've had our first discharge — meaning someone who's made it through the cycle. But I will say we're early, right? We're still early in this process," the commissioner said.

The city's public dashboard on the outbreak was updated at 8 p.m. Monday to add five more cases — bringing the count to 23 from 18 that were reported Sunday night.

Officials are urging New Yorkers who have lived or worked in ZIP codes 10028, 10128 and 10075 — the neighborhoods of Yorkville and Carnegie Hill, from East 74th to East 96th Streets — to contact a healthcare provider if they develop any flu-like symptoms.

The health department hasn't identified the source of the outbreak but believes a cooling tower to be responsible. Health officials are now racing to test 160 cooling towers in the area to see which one may be the "smoking gun," Martin said at a virtual town hall Monday.

City Council Speaker Julie Menin said she is "deeply concerned that the source of this outbreak has not yet been identified."

Not contagious

The disease, which spreads through contaminated water vapor, is not contagious and can be treated using antibiotics.

But it can be fatal if not treated in a timely manner and people over 50, smokers and those with chronic lung disease or weakened immune systems are at higher risk.

City officials passed laws requiring quarterly inspections for the roughly 5,000 cooling towers across the Big Apple — where Legionella bacteria can thrive — after a 2014 outbreak in The Bronx killed 16 people.

Another outbreak killed seven people and left more than 90 hospitalized in Harlem last year, prompting officials to strengthen regulations, with building owners now required to test for Legionella bacteria every 31 days when a cooling tower is in active use.

An additional $13 million was added to DOH coffers to grow its ranks of cooling tower inspectors to 54, with community engagement initiatives also being launched under Mayor Mamdani.

You got to hand it to Charlize

Charlize Theron graces the London premiere of "The Odyssey" on Monday in a Givenchy black velvet dress, with gigantic white bow-accented arm warmers, glittery chain earrings and a highlighted cornrow 'do. Theron plays Calypso in Christopher Nolan's star-studded adaptation of Homer's epic tale.

Anthony Harvey/Shutterstock

Girl, dad shot in Fla. lot

An 11-year-old girl and her father were shot and wounded when gunfire erupted in a Florida McDonald's parking lot — with doctors saying a stray bullet lodged in the child's head cannot be removed.

Dora Belen Rivera and her father, Oscar Roman Miron, were sitting in an SUV outside McDonald's on June 27, waiting for their order, when violence erupted in the parking lot, according to the Hallandale Beach Police Department and local reports.

Eighteen-year-old Ralph N-Kosi Blue, who was about to start his shift at the fast-food spot, allegedly opened fire at a person running toward him, striking the young girl in the head and her dad in the hip, NBC 6 South Florida reported.

Footage obtained by the outlet showed the two men frantically circling the family's car and ducking while Blue allegedly fired off shots, with screams echoing from inside the bullet-ridden vehicle.

"Oscar and his family became innocent victims of a senseless act of gun violence while sitting inside their vehicle in the parking lot of a McDonald's in Hallandale Beach," a GoFundMe started by their family said. "Oscar and his family had no involvement whatsoever in the incident."

Two other children, ages 2 and 5, were also in the car at the time and miraculously were not hurt, police said. *Anna Young*

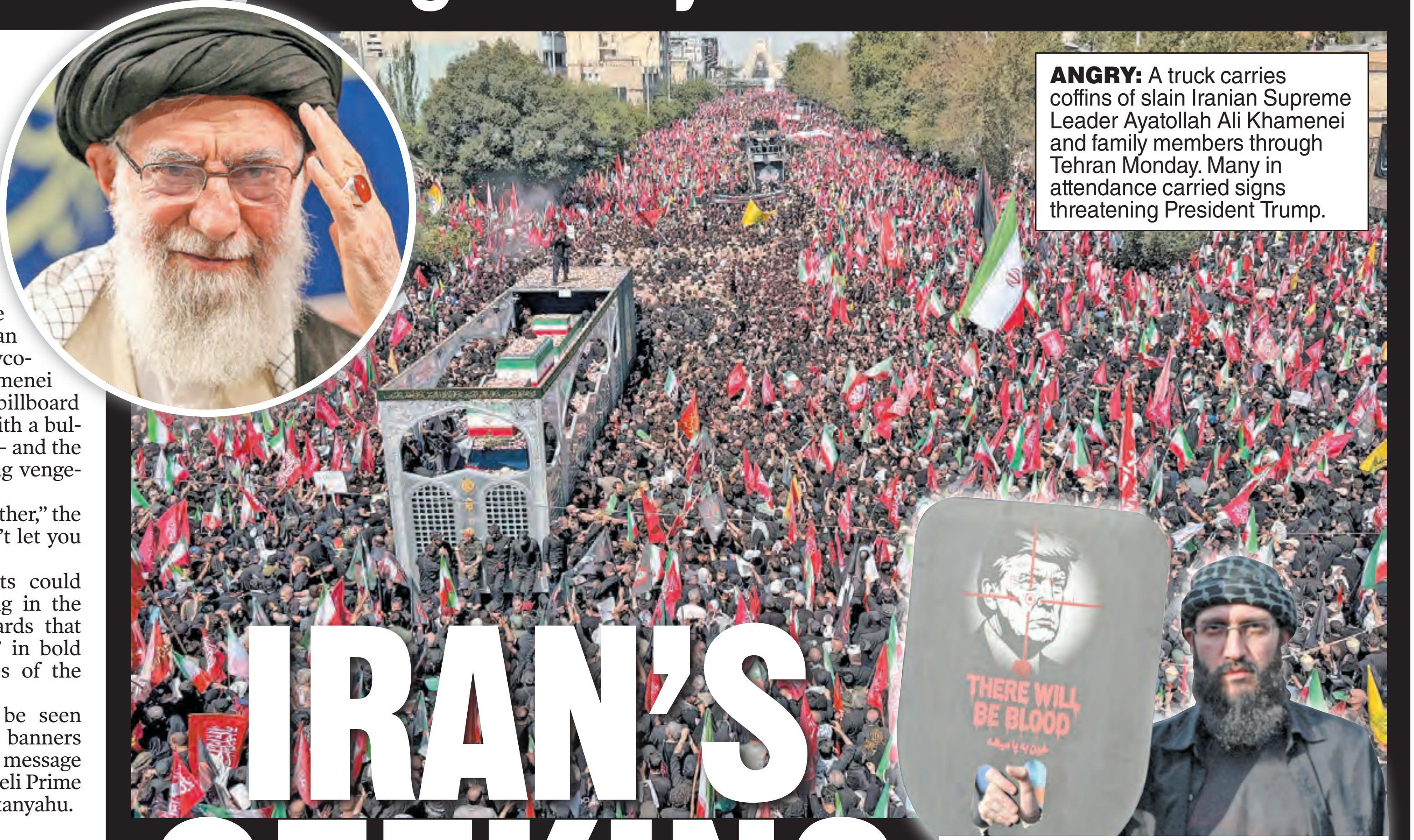
UN condemns Sudan violence

The UN Human Rights Council on Monday passed a motion condemning the escalating violence committed by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces in Sudan's al-Obeid region, while setting up an urgent inquiry into alleged abuses there.

Britain, which brought the motion alongside 14 other states, has previously warned of the risk of large-scale atrocities as the RSF amassed forces around one of Sudan's largest cities.

Reuters

US, Israeli bigs target of ayatollah funeral's ire



ANGRY: A truck carries coffins of slain Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and family members through Tehran Monday. Many in attendance carried signs threatening President Trump.

IRAN'S SEEKING REVENGE

We Kill Trump

AP Photo/Vahid Salemi; AFP via Getty Images; Behnam Tofighi/UPI/Shutterstock; EPA

By RONNY REYES

Iranians loyal to the regime called for the assassination of President Trump during the funeral procession for slain Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Monday.

Footage from the streets of Tehran showed a group of sycophants honoring Khamenei by hurling stones at a billboard that showed Trump with a bullet aimed at his head — and the loyalists are demanding vengeance.

"The US killed our father," the banner read. "We won't let you go!"

Many on the streets could also be seen marching in the procession with placards that read, "KILL TRUMP," in bold lettering with pictures of the American president.

Groups could also be seen marching with long banners that carried the same message against Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Threats to officials

Others also held ominous boards depicting Trump, Netanyahu, Vice President JD Vance and War Secretary Pete Hegseth — all of whom had crosshairs of a gunsight on them with the words, "There will be blood."

Calls for revenge for the slain Khamenei have grown in recent days, with Iran's most senior clerics calling for the assassinations of both Trump and Netanyahu last week.

The 88-member Assembly of Experts issued a 10-point statement in which it said killing "the wicked prime minister of the Zionist regime" and "the criminal American president" was a religious duty that must be carried out "under any circumstances."

The statement was issued just two days after hardliners in the assembly claimed it was a moral obligation for anyone with access to Trump to take revenge "on American soil."

Iran and the US currently have a cease-fire in place for Khamenei's six-day funeral procession, which began on Friday in a national procession led by the slain ayatollah's casket.

Khamenei's coffin, which was displayed in the holy city of Qom, will travel to two Shi'ite shrine cities near Iraq before returning for a burial in Mashhad, officials said.

Killed months ago

The supreme leader was killed in Israeli airstrikes within the first hours of the Iran War. The strikes also badly wounded his son, Mojtaba Khamenei and killed his family.

Mojtaba, whom US intelligence believes is "probably gay," took over the top role from his dad and is believed to have strong ties to the hardline Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps.

He has not been seen in public since the war began.

Trump said over the weekend that peace talks with Iran had been delayed for a week by the funeral ceremonies. On Monday he reiterated that the US would either reach a deal with Iran or "finish the job," renewing his threat of military action.

Israel's defense minister, Israel Katz, said on Monday that the elder Khamenei had been killed because he led a program to destroy Israel.

"Any Iranian leader who will again try to pursue plans to destroy Israel will be killed as well," Katz said.

Not an endorsement

While Tehran was filled with thousands of mourners on Monday, analysts — and even senior Iranian officials — cautioned that the crowd size cannot be equated to a popular endorsement of continued theocratic rule.

"If anyone's thinking this is a litmus test for the popularity of the Islamic Republic, history tells us otherwise. It's a funeral, and Iranians do funerals very well," said Ali Ansari, professor of modern history at St Andrews University in Scotland.

Reuters spoke to people attending the rallies who said they were only there as spectators or were motivated by a sense of religious duty in a country of strong Shi'ite Muslim tradition, rather than to display political allegiance.

With Wires

Missiles fired

Iran's Revolutionary Guards fired at least two missiles at commercial ships transiting through the Strait of Hormuz on Monday night, Axios reported, citing two US officials.

Two commercial ships suffered significant damage but had no casualties, the report said.

Separately, Britain's maritime security agency said a tanker caught fire after being hit by an unknown projectile east of Oman's Limah early on Tuesday. *Reuters*

Hamps hookup grounds A-Rod

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HE'S stepping up to the plate with a new lady. The "mystery woman" spotted locking lips with former Yankees slugger **Alex Rodriguez** at **Michael Rubin**'s star-studded July Fourth white party in the Hamptons last Wednesday is private fitness coach **Meghan Hayden**, multiple sources tell Page Six.

One source tells us, "They are dating. It's new. She's a really nice person from a great family."

The new couple was spotted looking cozy once again at Bounce Beach in Montauk over the holiday weekend. "They came with a crew of people and definitely looked coupled up," a spy tells us. "There were other girls trying to talk and flirt with him, but the friends at the table nicely redirected them."

We're told the group danced the night away at the hot spot to sets by model and DJ **Ethan** and **Little Fax the Machine**.

A-Rod and Hayden were also seen sitting on a bench in Sag Harbor.

Hayden is a private fitness coach, former Division I athlete and University of Miami graduate, where she earned a bachelor's degree in exercise physiology, according to her website, Take Off With Meg.

"When Meghan isn't training clients, she's most likely biking to her next session or modeling on set with household brands like Under Armour & Athleta," her bio reads.

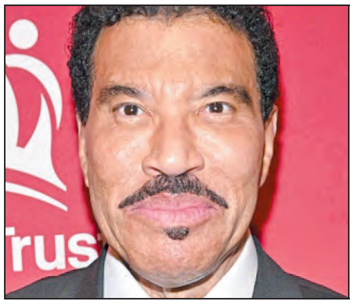
Rodriguez's budding romance comes after his split from **Jaclyn Cordeiro**. The pair dated for three years before quietly calling it quits around March, a source previously told Page Six.

Cordeiro told TMZ in May, "Alex and I are currently taking some time apart but there continues to be mutual love, care and deep respect between us and for our families. We remain supportive of one another, and there is absolutely no animosity, drama or negative story here."

Since the breakup, A-Rod was spotted flirting with multiple women at celeb magnet the Corner Store in Soho in May.

Crest of the best

SNOOP Dogg performed during Nylon mag's three-day residency at hot spot Surf Lodge in front of guests including **Millie Bobby Brown** and her husband, **Jake Bongiovi**, TikToker **Alix Earle**, "Scream Queens" star **Emma Roberts**, DJ and producer **Zack Bia**, "Summer House's" **Kyle Cooke**, "I Love Boosters" actress **Eiza González**, influencer **Anastasia Karanikolaou**, **Bethenny Frankel** and **Ava Dash**, the daughter of **Damon Dash** and **Rachel Roy**. The multiday Montauk affair — co-hosted by Starbucks — also featured **Murda Beatz**, **Hugel** and **Carlita**. At one point, Carlita was holding what appeared to be a joint in Snoop's mouth.



Lionel roars back

LIONEL Richie thanked fans for their support after suffering a health scare onstage that forced him to cancel shows. "Thank you for every message, every kind word, and for all your love," he wrote on Instagram over the weekend, with photos of him smiling onstage. "I'm doing well, and I'm grateful for all of you." Richie (above) added, "See you in Toronto . . . let's party all night long!" Over a week ago, Richie, 77, was singing a less optimistic tune after he was forced to postpone shows due to feeling "dizzy" during his tour-opener in Minnesota.

After playing a therapist, Penelope Cruz is on top of the couch. She tells Porter mag of her character in new movie "The Invite": "She's bright, she's deep, she's complicated, but she is also unstable . . . She's like a little shark, observing."

Xavi Gordo for Porter

Storm-tossed masses, give me your Resy!

NO reservation? No safety! A violent thunderstorm wreaked havoc in Sag Harbor on July Fourth, and a source tells Page Six that buzzy French bistro Le Bilboquet denied people seeking refuge — because they didn't have reservations. "Emergency alerts went off . . . informing us that there were 80 mph winds and to take shelter. People were huddling inside their boats and running and screaming outside," they said. But the restaurant "wouldn't let people in. They were like, 'Do you have a reservation?' They left people outside." Another source said that around the restaurant, there were "umbrellas and dishes falling . . . One woman got pushed to the ground. Another woman's leg [was] cut." Bilboquet owner **Philippe Delgrange** told us they did the best they could to "manage the crowd" and "everyone from outside [was] safely moved indoors."

Club not safe for Turk

SOHO House's pop-up in Turkey has been forced to close down — as many Americans prepare to fly there for summer vacations. The posh members-only club has run Scorpios in Bodrum for the past three years, but it temporarily closed over friction with local businesses. A source familiar with the matter told Page Six that Soho House's standby ambulance and doctors couldn't access the club, while staffers were prevented from bringing food-grade ice onto the property. Scorpios said in a statement, "Under the current circumstances being imposed on us, we are no longer able to operate in a way that meets the standards, values and responsibilities we hold ourselves to."

Flooded by crashers

CAN'T steal their thunder. A major storm didn't stop the Hamptons from partying. **Richie Akiva** hosted his annual bash, The Afters, bringing out A-list guests and hundreds of crashers. We hear that while 400 people were invited, 1,000 showed up. Some even resorted to "sneaking into the event through the surrounding woods" at Sagaponack beach, says a spy. A source lucky enough to get inside tells us **Mike Tyson** celebrated his 60th birthday, and **Tobey Maguire**, **Tate McRae**, **Alix Earle** and many more attended the event co-hosted by fashion designer **Elie Tahari**'s son, **Jeremey Tahari**. McRae (above) and Earle "were dancing on a banquette for hours," we're told. "They took their heels off and climbed up on the couch . . . It felt like a classy outdoor rave in the Hamptons."

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Page Six Hollywood

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Page Six Hollywood
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By Ian Mohr

Welcome to Page Six Hollywood...

In today's newsletter, we have a mix of news that only P6H can provide!

Writer at Large **Tatiana Siegel** looks at the controversy surrounding **Casey Wasserman** after another recording artist exited his agency on Tuesday in the wake of the bombshell Epstein data dump, as well as his alleged feud with WME superagent **Ari Emanuel**.

We deployed Senior Columnist **Peter Kiefer** on a

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CHIP HAS SAILED

Fired Ford cookie man refuses to be rehired

TOUGH COOKIES: Kurt Kromm (left) said he "emotionally couldn't go back" to his old job after he was let go without an apology after being wrongfully accused of stealing a chocolate chip cookie.

Frito-Lay North America, Inc.

By ARIEL ZILBER

Ford asked a veteran electrician it wrongly accused of stealing a $1.95 cookie to come back to work, but the worker refused to return, claiming he never got an apology after the fiasco.

The bizarre saga began at Ford's Kentucky Truck Plant in Louisville, in the wee hours of May 9, when Kurt Kromm approached an Aramark self-checkout kiosk to buy two Grandma's Chocolate Chip Cookies for $1.95.

Kromm, who spent 11 years repairing robots and automated equipment at the plant, told The Post he swiped his debit card, but the payment screen flashed red, indicating the transaction failed.

Kromm, 60, a diabetic whose blood sugar had dropped to 60 during his overnight shift, swiped again.

This time, the machine never displayed the usual green approval checkmark, but it didn't reject the payment either.

Believing the purchase had gone through, Kromm returned to work.

"I figured, well, it probably went through," Kromm said. "And I might have went over to the other kiosk and paid. This was so inconsequential to me — $1.95. I figured I paid."

A week later, on May 16, two supervisors summoned him to the labor office, where he was shown surveillance video and fired for allegedly stealing the cookie.

"The bargainer says, 'This is bad,' " Kromm recalled. "I said, 'For what?' They said, 'They want to terminate you for taking a cookie.' I was like, 'What are you talking about?' "

Kromm told The Post that company officials showed him surveillance footage from an Aramark self-checkout kiosk that appeared to show a failed transaction after he swiped his debit card.

Ford immediately escorted him from the plant, refusing to let him retrieve his belongings, he said.

"They just terminated me, walked me out of the building," Kromm recounted. "I had to get the union steward to even go get my personal laptop because they wouldn't let me go get anything."

'Charge was there'

After being let go, Kromm went to work gathering evidence that he had indeed paid the $1.95 for the cookie.

Days later, he asked a former coworker to photograph the break-room kiosk showing the cookie's actual price. He then checked his bank records again.

"The charge was there," Kromm said. "It was on my credit card, the first charge of the day at 3:38 in the morning."

He immediately emailed screenshots of the transaction to Ford labor executives and union officials.

According to Kromm, the company responded about 10 days later by demanding a notarized bank statement verifying the payment. Kromm supplied it, and weeks later, Ford informed him he would be reinstated with full back pay — roughly $33,000 — and invited him to return.

But by then, Kromm said, the damage had already been done. He refused.

"I emotionally couldn't go back," he said. "I worked with 8,500 people. I didn't get to say goodbye to anybody. I'd been there 11 years.

"There was no apology. There was no serious, 'We're sorry,' " Kromm told The Post. "There was just, 'Oh, you're not coming back?' No, I am not interested in coming back."

Instead, he said, the company lost an exemplary employee.

"I'm a pretty damn smart guy," Kromm told The Post. "I fixed every piece of equipment you asked me to work on. And in the end, you did this to me."

Despite receiving back pay and another chance to reclaim his old job, Kromm said his trust in the company is gone.

"I expected to work for Ford until I retired," he said. "I loved working for Ford. I never thought it would end this way. It was a home away from home. This was tremendously difficult for me, but I couldn't go back. I just couldn't do it."

The bizarre case was first reported by journalist Phoebe Wall Howard's Substack newsletter Shifting Gears.

Ford, while declining to discuss Kromm's individual case, previously acknowledged to Shifting Gears that "there are times when we look into things and realize it could have been handled differently. When that happens, we try to rectify it."

Viral star killled in Florida

A 21-year-old influencer known as DreamDoll Brii has died after being shot while in a lime-green Lamborghini.

Brianna Johnson "succumbed to her injuries" in Miramar, Fla., on Sunday after a white sedan pulled up alongside the driver's side and opened fire, police said.

Two other occupants of the Lamborghini Urus — who CBS reports are male — were also hit and rushed to a hospital in critical condition.

Johnson's family members said the three were at a big party earlier that night, 7News reported.

Loved ones said the group later stopped at a gas station, where a fight broke out, according to the outlet.

Surveillance footage obtained by 7News showed a light-colored car following the Lamborghini down the street before speeding off after shots were fired.

The Lamborghini can then be seen rolling into a property opposite.

"Certainly they targeted this particular car for some reason," Miramar Police Chief Delrish Moss said, according to NBC 6.

Johnson was best known for her viral track "Bend Ova," which TMZ reported had become popular on TikTok. *Alex Diaz*

More power to Cubans

Cuba began to slowly restore power Monday after the country's national electric grid collapsed earlier in the day, the latest blow to an island already suffering from severe energy, fuel and medicine shortages.

Grid operator UNE said it was providing electricity to some vital services, including hospitals and food-production centers, but by late afternoon was able to serve only 1% of the capital Havana's demand.

Officials have not given a cause for the grid's collapse.

Cuba has for months suffered power outages linked in part to a decrepit grid and a US oil blockade. *Reuters*

Feds to ax loans for low-earning degrees

In $tudents' best 'interest'

RIKKI SCHLOTT

Adobe Stock

OWE NO! A provision in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act will cut off student loans for programs that fail to provide grads with a higher base salary than high-school graduates in their state.

STUDENTS will no longer be able to take out federal loans to pay for programs that fail to provide them with a return on investment, thanks to a new federal policy that went into effect on July 1.

And it's about time.

It's a response to a shocking fact: Graduates of more than 800 college programs across the country — including at institutions like the University of Southern California and The New School in New York City— make less than the average high-school grad four years after getting a degree, despite all that time, effort and tuition money.

Now the American government will have no part in propping up degree programs that may not even lead to a livable wage. A provision of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act cuts them off from federal aid access if they can't break the non-grad salary baseline.

Programs that fail the test for two out of three consecutive years will no longer be able to bury kids in debt — at least not on the taxpayer's dime.

These Big Beautiful Bill revisions represent "the biggest set of changes to financial aid in decades," according to Robert Kelchen, head of the Department of Educational Leadership at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. And change is much needed.

Teens and 20-somethings should be protected by the federal government from making a catastrophic financial decision, like taking on debt to finance a degree that ultimately could decrease their earnings potential. But until now the government has been enabling those decisions by underwriting loans without regard to the value of the investment.

High-profile 'failures'

"It makes complete sense from a student perspective and also from a taxpayer perspective [to stop giving] money to programs that leave students financially worse off," Michael Itzkowitz, president of the HEA Group, said.

The HEA Group, a policy organization focused on higher education and economic mobility, used Education Department data to compare average graduate earnings from some 32,000 bachelor degree programs around the country with average high school graduate wages in the same states.

According to the findings, 804 programs — 2% of all undergraduate programs that graduate 40,000 students annually — were flagged as potentially failing the new policy changes, including several at high-profile universities.

Graduates with music degrees from the University of Southern California, Juilliard and The New School earned less on average four years after graduation than high school graduates — making $34,124, $32,842 and $32,930, respectively.

What grads want

Graduates of the Fine and Studio Arts program at New York City's Cooper Union pulled in just $24,920 on average four years out, and students with degrees in liberal arts as well as fine and studio arts from Bard College made slightly below the typical high school grad, at $34,571 and $34,667, respectively.

The Post reached out to these schools for comment.

Mark Kantrowitz, author of "How to Appeal for More College Financial Aid," says that we can expect to "see some chaos resulting from" these new changes.

The Department of Education will analyze tax records from the Treasury Department to calculate the return on investment for students by school and program.

"We may see some colleges discontinuing some of their programs when they see significant shifts in enrollment and borrowing patterns," Kantrowitz said. "The higher-cost colleges that have the least generous financial aid [are] going to be the most impacted."

Itzkowitz says that the new earnings provision actually is exactly what students are asking for: "If you speak to any [college] student . . . they will want to earn more than someone that has a high school diploma. They would probably [not] want to attend a program if the majority of students can't even earn that amount."

Buried in debt

But Andrew Gillen, an educational researcher at the Cato Institute, says the changes from the Big Beautiful Bill "don't go far enough."

"You could still have programs that just barely increase their graduates' earnings but load them up with so much debt that it's still a terrible financial investment for the student and for the taxpayer," he said.

Yes, it might be uncomfortable or even emotional for some in academia to acknowledge that many degrees, particularly in the humanities, are poor investments for many students.

But it's time we confront that truth so that students can make informed decisions about their futures.

The student loan system enabled by the federal government spent years foisting debt onto teenagers who were told that college is the singular pathway to success, without ever asking whether the programs accomplished what they promised.

Predictably, schools raised tuition, passed the bill over to the taxpayer and buried kids in debt that they can't repay. That's why more and more young people are concluding that college simply isn't worth it and dismissing the value of education altogether.

More responsible federal lending can prevent young people from throwing the baby out with the bathwater and help us reach a healthier middle ground — where colleges have a duty to make their product worth it, and students can pursue education with the confidence that they'll be better off for it.

WED BILL$ RING TO

Social-media pressure to ‘glow’ at any price

By ALLISON LAX

THE first thought that popped into Jade Voight’s head after getting proposed to by her longtime beau wasn’t where her wedding would be or the color of her bridesmaids’ dresses.

It was where on her calendar the 30-year-old could book her first of many beauty appointments to get head to toe “bridal-ready” for her big day.

Within weeks of getting engaged, the makeup artist scheduled an appointment to overhaul her entire skin-care routine, signed up for a costly Pilates membership, planned out her Botox and filler appointments for the next three to four months — and at one point even considered getting a $25,000 breast augmentation.

“This is one of the most precious moments in our lives to spend with friends and family, and we want to look and feel our best . . . These photos are forever. You want your kids to be like, ‘My mom was hot,’ ” she explained to The Post.

After crunching the numbers, Voight estimates she will spend “in the high six figures” for her dreamy 2027 Tuscan villa wedding — $62,000 of which will go towards beauty prep.

“I really just took this opportunity to be like, ‘OK, these are the things I don’t love about myself — I want to love them about myself for my wedding,’ ” she said.

Voight isn’t alone in feeling this way.

Circles under the eyes

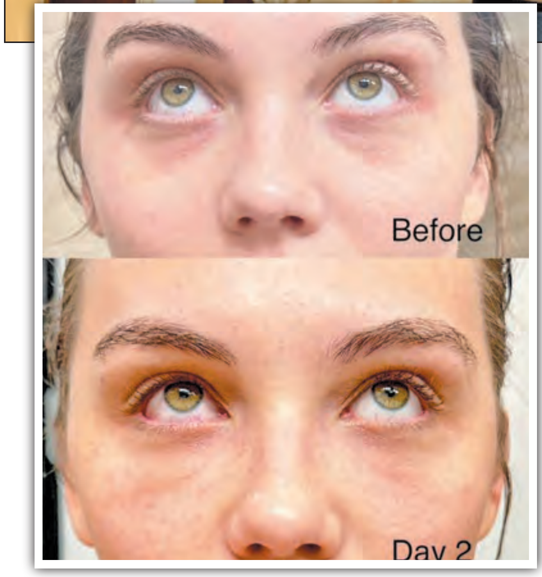
Many of today’s almost-wives, especially New York and New Jersey ones, are upping the aesthetic ante, spending 8% to 15% of their $49,000, $57,000 and sometimes $100,000 wedding budgets on beauty services, according to PJ’s College of Cosmetology and The Knot.

And social media might be to blame.

The #bridalglowup on TikTok has thousands of videos, with titles like “10 things I do every day so I look snatched for my wedding” and “5 wedding prep must-dos to glow up,” that show engaged women taking extreme measures a year out from their wedding to look “their hottest” when standing at the altar.

When embarking on her glow-up journey, the first order of business for Voight was addressing her perpetual under-eye circles, a lifelong insecurity.

Beauty Bomb Aesthetics



EYE DO: To prepare for her big day with fiancé Ryan in Italy, Jade Voight (above) rid herself of under-eye circles with EZ Gel platelet-rich treatments for $1,000 apiece in which your blood is drawn, spun and re-injected to simulate collagen injections.

To combat them, she’s receiving EZ Gel platelet-rich fibrin — a $1,000-a-pop treatment where one’s blood is drawn, spun, then re-injected to stimulate collagen production. She had the treatment performed at SkinSpirt med spa inside Nordstrom NYC.

“One of my clients was doing it, and she looked amazing — I didn’t even need to use concealer on her,” Voight recalled to The Post. “I was like, ‘Sign me up. I don’t care how expensive it is.’ ”

Since her New Year’s Eve engagement, Voight has also undergone micro-needling sessions on her face, neck and hands, totaling $275 a session. Her “vampire facial” micro-needling involved being injected with platelet-rich plasma. Plus she swapped out her skin-care products for medical-grade ones, which set her back $1,500 per refill.

She’s also been keeping up with her regular Botox and filler appointments, which cost her around $2,000 every three to four months.

To get her body into wedding-day shape, Voight shells out $300 per month for Pilates classes.

“It’s kind of like, ‘OK, girl, you have a year — get with it,’ ” joked Voight, who also tried a fat-burning peptide — for $200 a month — early on in her engagement and plans to resume closer to her wedding.

The most extreme aesthetic alteration that the New Yorker considered in preparation for her wedding day was a breast augmentation — which would have run her a whopping $25,000.

“I don’t have a chest, and I was like — all these [wedding] dresses are made for girls with boobs,” said Voight. “But my friends and family talked me out of that one.”

However, she is considering pulling the plug on arm liposuction — a procedure that, if she goes through with it, will put her out $10,000.

“We’re getting married in the summertime, so I’ll probably want a sleeveless dress, so I just want my arms to look really snatched. I don’t know if I’m going to do it or not, but it is a consideration,” she said.

This pricey prep, which Voight has been able to afford after cutting back on her “random shopping days,” has been going on behind the scenes while her hubby-to-be, Ryan, is blissfully unaware.

“I don’t tell my fiancé all the things I’m doing either, because the less [he] knows the better,” Voight told The Post. “Sometimes, they don’t need to know all of our secrets.”

Do less shopping

Alexandra Mahl Dean is all too familiar with bridal-prep beauty secrets.

The law-firm worker estimated that she spent $26,890 of her own money, roughly 15% to 20% of her $150,000 wedding budget, on beauty prep, thanks to pressure from social media.

“You see everyone posting these amazing results before and after their little procedures, and you’re like, ‘Oh my god, I need to get that,’ ” she revealed to The Post.

Though the Long Island bride initially “took a lull” when it came to physically prepping for her big day, she “locked in” around September 2025 for her June 2026 wedding.

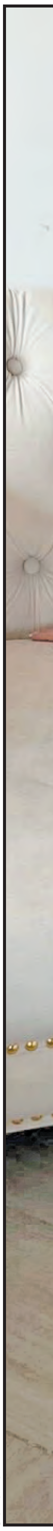
The self-described “serial shopper,” who would easily spend $1,000 on a single New Jersey mall trip and treat herself to $6,300 Chanel bags, pumped the brakes on those pricey habits to afford her bridal prep regimen.

For the 29-year-old, who already kept up with her $1,100 lip-filler sessions every nine months, this meant adding on monthly PRF appointments, totaling around $1,200 for four sessions.

She also underwent three sessions of micro-needling to “refine her pores,” which set her back $1,800, and stayed diligent with $250 hydra-facials every three months before starting on a luxury skin-care routine that cost her around $800.

To get her hair, which Mahl Dean described as “not thin but not the thickest,” wedding-ready, she used hair extensions that cost nearly $4,000.

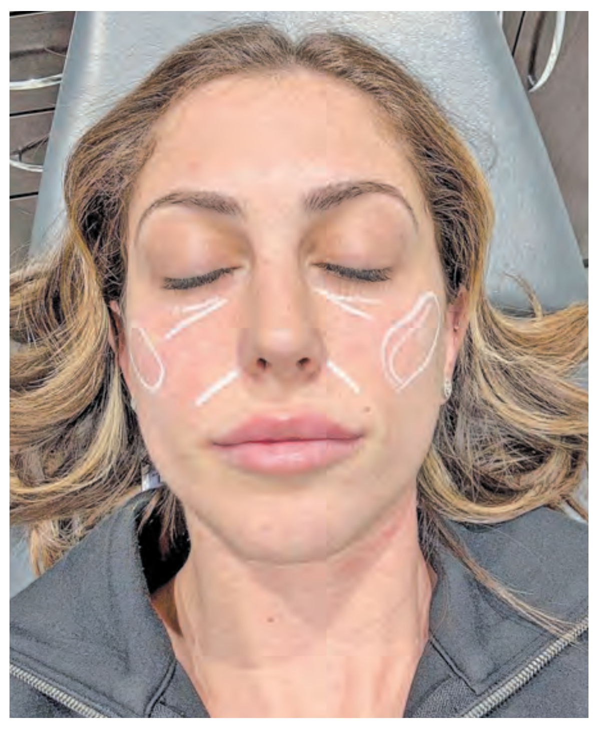
Though the Long Islander “hates” working out, she forced



Juliana Fink

BE ‘BRIDAL-READY’

LET’S FACE IT: Bride-to-be Alexandra Mahl Dean of Long Island estimates that she shelled out $26,890 on beauty prep ahead of her wedding, largely due to pressure from social media. Those expenses included undergoing three sessions of micro-needling to “refine her pores,” which she said cost $1,800, and she stayed diligent with $250 hydrafacials every three months.



herself to join a $220-a-month Pilates studio six months before her big day.

Despite all this work and money, Mahl Dean told The Post that frankly she finds the concept of bridal readiness to be a “rip-off.”

“I think the whole concept of getting bridal-ready is kind of overrated,” Mahl Dean admitted, adding that she paid as she went along and never set a firm beauty budget. “You’re getting all prepped for this one day, but you’re just going to look like your normal self the day after.”

‘I have a year’

Sammi Scotti disagrees.

For the 29-year-old logistics director, her priority in preparation for her August 2026 nuptials has been correcting her acne-prone skin — having spent close to $10,000 so far in customized facial treatment packages at her local med spa.

“I was like, all right — I have a year to get my skin in the best shape it’s ever been in,” Scotti told The Post.

In addition to upgrading her skin-care regimen to medical-grade products, $500 for the entire set, which needs to be restocked every two to three months, Scotti also began regularly receiving $570 Botox in preparation for the wedding.

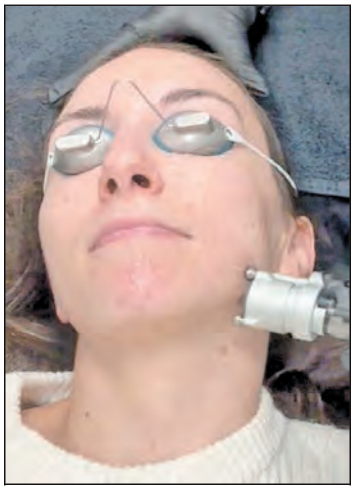
Every two-month $130 hair glosses were also in order, along with monthly $140 Russian mani-pedis, $100 spray tans for her bridal shower, bachelorette and wedding, $65 brow maintenance every three weeks and $180 lymphatic drainage sessions every three weeks.

While the gym has “always been a part of my life,” the 29-year-old amped up her workout routine, having added hot Pilates and reformer classes to the mix, totaling $600 a month.

Scotti shared that her fiancé knows ballpark numbers for her beauty costs and is “really supportive,” though he doesn’t realize his bride-to-be is spending a whopping $31,276 all on her own to get herself bridal-ready.

“My friends and family know me. They know, I’m a maintenance person,” she told The Post.

“I think my friends think I’m nuts for how much I spent on my skin, but I also think the results speak for themselves, and they know me as a person, that I’m not going to pay money unless I see value in it.”



Beauty Bomb Aesthetics

HEY, LOOK: Sammi Scotti (above and below) has taken the opportunity to drop about $10,000 to treat acne-prone skin with custom facial treatments.

Smithsonian exhibits ‘bias’

‘Extreme’ activist leaders: WH

By RYAN KING

WASHINGTON — The White House lashed out against the Smithsonian Institution’s leadership Monday, accusing the network that runs 21 museums of “extreme political activism” and failing to celebrate America.

In a blistering 162-page report ordered by President Trump last year, the White House Domestic Policy Council concluded the institute’s leaders “cannot be trusted to tell America’s story honestly and in a way that is inspiring, unifying, and worthy of our great republic.”

The National Museum of American History “has become subject to institutional capture by a radical, activist ideology that is fundamentally opposed to telling the noble, honest story of the great country we know and love,” said the report, which dropped on Independence Day.

Some observers believe that the report could be a prelude to an attempt to significantly shake up the Smithsonian’s leadership.

Trump signaled in March last year that he was keen on changing the institute, hoping to combat “divisive narratives” and “improper ideology” across its top museums.

‘Problematized’

The National Museum of American History drew particular ire from the White House, which accused it of minimizing the Founding Fathers and treating patriotic narratives “with suspicion.”

The panel underscored how Anthea Hartig, who has led NMAH since 2019, described history as a “prime tool of social justice” and noted how “we work to reframe the traditional celebratory narrative of U.S. history for visitors.”

“She claims to have had a personal head start ‘propped up as I was and I am by the cushions of whiteness and the pillows of the bourgeoisie,’ ” the report noted.

“Hartig believes the museum profession has ‘to figure out’ how ‘we’re going to’ ‘problematize’ the ‘250th Anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 2026,’ [and] that ‘loving America is very complicated.’ ”

The panel further dinged the museum for removing “infinite richness” and “American history” from its mission statement.

The White House alleged the museum has a policy of tying exhibits to themes of “race/identity, gender/sexuality, climate change, immigration/migrations, economic inequality, technological change, and nationalism/globalism.”

“It’s hard to get out of the ‘America First’ mentality . . . but we wrestle — I wrestle — with that all the time,” Hartig explained about her approach to exhibits during a presentation to history students.

She suggested exhibits should include “the entirety of the Americas, not just our part of North America.”

The domestic policy council claimed Hartig had advocated on behalf of illegal immigrants in her lectures, and tore into NMAH’s “Girlhood (it’s complicated)” exhibit and its anti-racism displays.

“In short, NMAH’s repeated message to young visitors is: ‘Be a social and political activist,’ ” the report jabbed.

A Smithsonian spokesperson rejected those complaints.

“For more than 180 years, the Smithsonian has served the American public with nonpartisan and independent scholarship, and we remain committed to doing so,” the spokesperson said.

AP Photo/Allison Robbert

AP (2)

HISTORICAL FRICTION: A visitor walks through the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History on Sunday, a day after America’s 250th birthday. The Trump administration has alleged political bias among the Smithsonian’s leadership, including NMAH Director Anthea Hartig (left).

PRINCE HARRY
Invite nix after “late” RSVP.

No room for Harry at palace

Buckingham Palace had no wiggle room for Prince Harry.

Early Monday, Harry’s reps announced he had accepted an invitation to stay at the palace this week, after finalizing his security plans — only for palace staffers to say that it would be impossible because he missed a July 3 deadline to let them know he was coming.

Harry, 41, arrived in London on Monday afternoon, but it’s not yet known where he’s staying.

“If they wanted him to stay there, they would find him a room even if he arrived in the middle of the night, let’s face it,” Hugo Vickers, royal biographer and friend of the family, told Page Six.

But Vickers does not blame the king, saying Charles’ staffers — whom Harry famously called the “men in gray suits” in his memoir, “Spare” — are in charge of protocol.

Sara Nathan

Girl missing on Lake Erie

An Ohio woman was arrested after her young neighbor vanished during a boating trip on Lake Erie — with another passenger found dead in the water the next day, reports said.

Angelique Cunningham, 11, disappeared while boating on the lake Wednesday night with her neighbor, Kristen Gerrie, 41, and Jonathan Ciha, 38 — whose body was discovered on Thursday, WTVG reported.

Gerrie was charged with endangering children.

Zoe Hussain

China tests nuclear-capable missile in Pacific

China fired a nuclear-capable ballistic missile from a doomsday submarine on Monday in a show of force just as its neighbors were signing a defense pact and ahead of a NATO summit.

The People’s Liberation Army fired the dummy warhead from a Type 094 nuclear submarine, the first such test since 2024, according to state media, which did not elaborate on the time or location of the launch.

New Zealand, which was signing a mutual defense agreement with Fiji, claimed the missile landed in the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone, which specifically prohibits the use and testing of atomic weapons.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning insisted the launch was appropriate and conducted safely, telling neighbors in the Pacific not to overreact.

“We hope relevant countries will not over-interpret the matter,” she said.

It is unclear which missile China tested, but the state-run Global Times tabloid suggested it was the JL-3, Beijing’s most advanced submarine-launched missile.

Ronny Reyes

Historic Wrong

America-hating elites distort our heritage

DANIEL McCARTHY

IN PURSUIT
EN BUSCA
WESTERN UNION

AP Photo/Rahmat Gul

Lady . . . *Tomato*?: The Smithsonian's America 250 exhibit features protest art, like this statue from a migrant farmworkers' strike.

'WARNING: The exhibits in this museum were prepared by people who don't want you to love your country." That's a disclaimer every entrance to the National Museum of American History ought to display, according to a new White House report excoriating the Smithsonian Institution and its flagship museum.

But it doesn't take a 160-page report to show what's wrong with the Smithsonian — just walk into any of its museums. With a bit of time on my hands in the Chinatown area of Washington, DC, last year, I decided to take a stroll through the National Portrait Gallery.

The art is as magnificent as ever, but it seemed every historical portrait had to be accompanied by two sets of text: one talking about the portrait itself, the other describing its subject's connection to slavery, however distant. For the Smithsonian's leadership, it often seems less like slavery is a part of American history — an important and awful part, to be sure — than that American history is part of the story of slavery.

My casual impression from the gallery was confirmed by the new White House report "Saving America's Story: How Ideological Capture at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History Erases Our Heritage."

The National Museum of American History was pitched to Congress in the 1950s as "intended to instill in each citizen a deepened faith in our country's destiny as champion of individual dignity and enterprise."

Yet Anthea Hartig, director of the museum today, has other priorities, including using history as a "prime tool of social justice." Hartig is white, but rather than punishing herself for her "privilege," she's trying to lay a guilt trip on the whole country, using taxpayer dollars to "problematize" the history she's supposed to preserve.

The Smithsonian's museums do have to tackle shameful subjects like slavery — but can the public trust that responsibility to someone like Hartig, who claims to have been "propped up . . . by the cushions of whiteness and the pillows of the bourgeoisie"? Her language is telling: Not only is it embarrassingly florid, its idiom is Marxist. This is not someone who should be teaching a class of kindergartners, much less leading one of the premier institutions of our national memory.

The result of having leaders like Hartig is thoroughly documented in the White House report. It notes the lack of exhibits on such fundamental figures of American history as George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. Christopher Columbus is characterized as a "thief," and the European settlement of the New World gets presented as the "profound unsettling of the continent."

"Museum materials repeatedly suggest that Christianity functioned principally as an instrument of conquest, exclusion or cultural erasure," the report finds, while other materials promote gender confusion to children. Visitors are asked to speculate whether Benjamin Franklin's experiments with electricity and "electric shocks" ever involved "an indentured servant or an enslaved person"— though no actual evidence suggests they did.

Smithsonian officials respond to criticisms by claiming the institution is "independent." Yet it isn't independent of taxpayers' dollars — Smithsonian museums receive more than 60% of their funding from the public. The Smithsonian's independence is only independence from accountability to the public and its values: The institution is independent of patriotism.

It would be fair enough if socialists and gender activists wanted to build their own museums, using their own money, to promote their revisionist view of America. Instead they feel entitled to use your taxes to teach you and your children to feel ashamed of your country.

The problem isn't limited to the NMAH or the rest of the Smithsonian's museums, unfortunately. Historical sites around the country have been colonized by ideologues looking to turn American history into a history of victim groups and oppression, with the heroes of the traditional telling — our Founders and greatest statesmen — recast as villains, even in their own homes.

James Madison's estate of Montpelier, for example, has been thoroughly co-opted by progressives, as documented by my Heritage Foundation colleague Brenda Hafera.

The new White House report demonstrates just how urgent is the need for reform. Americans are proud of what they've achieved in the name of liberty over 250 years — but if we leave the teaching of our history to progressives, our achievements will forever take second place to our failures.

FAST TAKES

Foreign desk: Europe's Internal NATO Problem

President Trump's "hostility" to NATO "boiled over during his war with Iran," when some alliance members "temporarily denied American forces access to their military bases," notes The New York Times' Massimo Calabresi, prompting Trump to ask: "Why should America stay in NATO?" Though NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte has tried to remain "optimistic," he keeps butting against "European shortcomings" that have "bedeviled the alliance," including "industrial protectionism, nationalist distrust and an instinct to blame America for everything." Underspending" on defense has "tanked" Europe's "military readiness." Even faced with threats of a US "drawdown," European "leaders still struggle to overcome" local contracting preferences and "centuries of suspicion" of German or French domination. The question now is "whether Europeans can be good allies for themselves."

America 250: Mamdani's Beef With the US

Far from being "grateful" or "celebratory" about America's 250th birthday, Mayor Mamdani, "surrounded by a host of grim, unsmiling immigrants like himself," gave a July 4 speech to "point out everything wrong with" the country, sighs Batya Ungar-Sargon at her Substack. Mamdani insisted that "America isn't the greatest, freest nation on earth," but a place where "children go hungry" and "undocumented neighbors" are disappeared by agents in "unmarked vans." Mamdani believes immigrants "will determine America's future, America's values, America's nature," because they have a "special power." According to him, "the only thing that makes America great, is that it can be fundamentally *changed* by people like him." How pathetic: America's greatness, he believes, lies only in allowing itself to be "perfected" by immigrants.

Sports take: FIFA's Red-Card Reversal

After President Trump called FIFA President Gianni Infantino, the organization partially suspended the red card for the US men's soccer team striker Folarin Balogun, observes National Review's Jim Geraghty. To Trump fans, that shows the president's "power," while critics say it proves Trump "believes in breaking the rules." Yet, notes ESPN's Andy Davies, the call was "based on slow-motion and still replays" of Balogun stepping on Tarik Muharemovic 's ankle, "which is not aligned with VAR protocols" in this case. Hmm, wonders Geraghty: "Do the folks upset about Balogun's reinstatement realize they're arguing that an exceptionally bad call by the ref must be kept in place, to protect the so-called integrity of the game?

Midterms beat: Court Followed 1st Amendment

Tom Steyer

"Can you believe it? The MAGA Supreme Court just rigged the November midterm election," The Wall Street Journal's Allysia Finlay snarks sarcastcally. "After a 6-3 majority struck down federal limits on the amount of money that party committees can spend in coordination with candidates," the media decided the court had handed the GOP a win — but they "spilled little ink on the majority's legal analysis" of spending limits that violate the First Amendment." "If money could buy elections," Tom Steyer would be governor of California. In fact, "what has turbocharged political spending is the massive expansion of government," so that "businesses donate to curry favor with the overlords who can make or break them." The left "lambastes corporate spending, but their socialist agenda will encourage more of it."

Gotham watch: Don't Buy Zo's Socialist 'Magic'

Mayor Mamdani "boasted" that New York City's "$125.8 billion budget proves socialists 'understand economics,' " but in reality, the budget shows "fiscal gimmickry" and "a huge bailout from Albany," warns the Washington Examiner editors. Mamdani said his "capitalist" predecessor Eric Adams "left the city with a $12 billion budget deficit," which Mamdani fixed via "socialist magic" — like raising "taxes on the wealthiest New Yorkers." True, he did raise taxes, but not nearly enough to hit his promised haul of "$500 million a year." And even if that number were accurate, it couldn't "close a $12 billion budget" hole by itself. So he used the same "budgeting tricks" and "gimmicks" he bashed. And the projected "gap next year is even higher, at $8.8 billion."

— *Compiled by The Post Editorial Board*

NEW YORK POST
America's oldest continuously published daily newspaper

Back Ukraine at NATO

As President Trump prepares to take center stage at the NATO summit in Ankara, Turkey, he must place the robust defense of Ukraine at the absolute top of the agenda. Whatever he does, he must not look to throw Kyiv under the bus.

Rather, he must communicate the necessity of holding the line, ramping up pressure on Moscow and bolstering its defense.

Russian aggression is Europe's generational security challenge (and down the road, potentially America's); it demands to be top-of-mind for every leader in the alliance. Anything less would signal weakness to Putin and embolden US adversaries.

Ukraine has shown great fortitude in repelling Russia's attacks: It's now struck repeatedly inside Russia itself, raising the cost of war for Moscow. And it's held the pace of Russia's acquisition of territory to a crawl.

Meanwhile, America and Europe's shared interests demand that Trump leverage the moment to rally the alliance to ensure Ukraine can continue to withstand the invasion. Greenland, funding disputes and being granted overflight permission are all sideshows to the key events on the European stage — namely, the threat of Russian militarism and Putin's sense of the historical necessity of Russia's domination.

No doubt, as Ukraine continues to frustrate Moscow, the killer in the Kremlin will once again rattle his nuclear saber again. Trump mustn't flinch; Putin knows any nuclear attack would result in a response that would spell the end of Russia.

This war is now in its fifth year and has cost Moscow dearly in treasure, lives and global reputation. It's not sustainable for Russia. Brave Ukraine has accepted its role as a buffer between civilization and barbarism. Our and NATO's shared financial burden, while significant, is nothing compared to the thousands of Ukrainian sons, brothers and husbands who have been lost, or to the sacrifice of decimated Mariupol.

President Trump, stand up for Ukraine in Ankara. It's the least we can do.

NYC's Eternal School Failures

The Success Academy charter-school network's just-released report on New York City public-school failure is so shocking and troubling even anti-charter-school teachers unions should be shaking in horror.

The report crunches the numbers on school accountability, quality, expenditures and standardized test results. Its finding? Widespread, pervasive, *tragic* dysfunction.

Remember this number: *906*. That's how many perennial failure factories, out of 1,600 schools, are allowed to fester year after year.

How bad are they? In 503 of them, the majority of kids students failed *both* math and reading last year, some for a whole decade. Despite massive amounts of extra resources and attempts at reform, these schools have *never successfully turned around*.

And bizarrely, the more a school fails, the more categorical federal aid it qualifies for.

The authors flag "the profound harm done to hundreds of thousands of children" and "the high societal cost of this failure" to properly educate kids in poor neighborhoods.

Meanwhile, education funding forever ratchets upward: Mayor Mamdani is handing the Department of Education $38.6 billion this year — an increase of almost *$4 billion* from last year, despite plummeting enrollment — *with no strings attached*.

Anyone who cares about education in the city needs to digest every word of this analysis. Here's the takeaway: The New York bureaucracy that runs the system *intentionally* mislead and obscure failures, mostly to protect the *adults*. And to hell with the kids.

We can, we must do better: Privately run charter schools see far superior results for the same student demographics, for far less money. They're open with their data, and it's not just teachers who face real accountability: Failing charters can, and do, get shut down.

The solutions are simple: Hold those 906 schools accountable, at long last, and give more parents better options by growing the public charter-school community.

Success Academy has done the city a great service by documenting these schools' eternal failures. Now it's time for the city and state to act — and save the kids of the future.

Crime's Good News — and Bad

Police boss Jessica Tisch and her NYPD rank-and-file have performed downright miracles — cutting the number of murders for the first six months of the year to its lowest level *in all of recorded history*.

Yet New Yorkers shouldn't feel complacent: Danger signs are on the horizon.

Through June 30, shootings and murders are the lowest they've ever been for the first half of a year. And all this while handling major events like the NBA finals, Knicks ticker-tape parade and FIFA's World Cup.

At the same time, though, subway and bus crimes have surged in the majority of NYPD patrol boroughs.

And over the Fourth of July weekend, 12 people were shot, including four kids at a Brooklyn barbecue,

Most worrisome, the budget Mayor Mamdani agreed on freezes the NYPD headcount, scrapping plans to add 580 cops, that almost all crime experts believe is critical.

And remember: Cuomo-era criminal-justice reforms continue to take a toll. Major felonies are on pace to end the year still well above the corresponding number in 2019, just before cashless bail went into effect.

Tisch and her cops have been beyond heroic in keeping crime numbers down.

The question now is: Will Mamdani and New York's pro-criminal laws soon undermine all her gains?

letters@nypost.com

Zohran's July 4th Speech: Dividing on a Day of Unity

THE ISSUE: Mayor Mamdani giving an anti-capitalism July 4th address while flanked by naturalized citizens.

•What a sadly missed opportunity ("Zo's U.S. Birthday bash," July 4).

For our nation's 250th birthday, Mayor Mamdani could have given a marvelous speech extolling the country that embraced him as a citizen less than decade ago and elected him as mayor of our greatest city. His journey embodies the pathway that is the American Dream.

Instead, flanked by naturalized citizens used as human props staring blankly at a camera, he offered a version of an American dystopia. His own career proves the inanity of his words.

Matthew Brief
Manhattan

•At no time did the mayor ever "bash" the nation, unless you think that constructive criticism is a form of bashing. He pointed out the truth, and for Republicans, the truth hurts.

In no way is Mamdani anti-American, as evidenced in his recent media interviews when he said the happiest day of his life was when he became a US citizen. The major difference between the policies of Mamdani and those of the current president is that Mamdani is empathetic to the needs of the people he was elected to serve.

Mamdani had the courage to say what needed to be said, and I applaud him for a job well done.

J.J. Crovatto
Ramsey, NJ

•Mamdani's speech was very focused on what is wrong with America. This is a big reason why he will never be a leader of real consequence. The fact that it was rendered on the celebration of the 250th anniversary of the greatest nation on Earth just added insult to injury.

Mayor Mamdani

I have always been proud of being a lifetime New Yorker, up until now. He is a total embarrassment. **Jackie Biaggi**
The Bronx

•In his address marking the 250th anniversary of this nation's founding, NYC's mayor just couldn't resist bad-mouthing this great country.

It's clear this sinister seducer, with his ubiquitous phony smile, is an ungrateful American.

President Trump was quite foolish to break bread with Mamdani, and the Dems are paying the price for stupidly inviting that wolf into their tent.

James Hyland
Beechhurst

•The DSA effectively "jumped the shark" with its self-satisfied leader Mamdani's poorly timed screed against America during its Independence Day celebrations.

His astonishing cluelessness only crystallized the absurdity of his gang of entitled clowns.

Mamdani and his smug DSA members only confirmed that their 15 minutes of fame is just about over. He should ask Sen. Chuck Schumer what that feels like.

Frank Diaz-Balart
Tomkins Cove

•The mayor's Independence Day address showed all his trademarks: hatred, jealousy and class warfare. It was a sour mix of communist talking points — such as about monopolies, negligent landlords and Elon Musk. He talked of the hard-working hands creating wealth for the few with soft hands. His statements on Musk were a good example of his jealousy. Yes, Musk is a trillionaire, but this money was not handed to him.

Instead of a benediction inspiring New Yorkers to be grateful, it was a whine by a spoiled child.

Mark Seitelman
Manhattan

•Congratulations to all the new citizens. Through perseverance and bravery, you accomplished your first step in pursuing your American dream!

In the picture with the mayor, everyone looks so unhappy. As they listened to sour Mamdani, I wonder if they thought they made a big mistake.

Connie Abate
Dumont, NJ

•It's absolutely appalling this mayor had the audacity to give an anti-American speech from City Hall.

I think it's time for New Yorkers to start a movement to have him removed from office. He has disgraced the city of New York and is incompetent. **Gene O'Brien**
Whitestone

•Of course Mamdani used his 4th of July speech to criticize America, and then in the next breath called for unity. If you can't see what a fraudulent liar you've elected, New Yorkers, I can't help you. **Rob Cerone**
Manhattan

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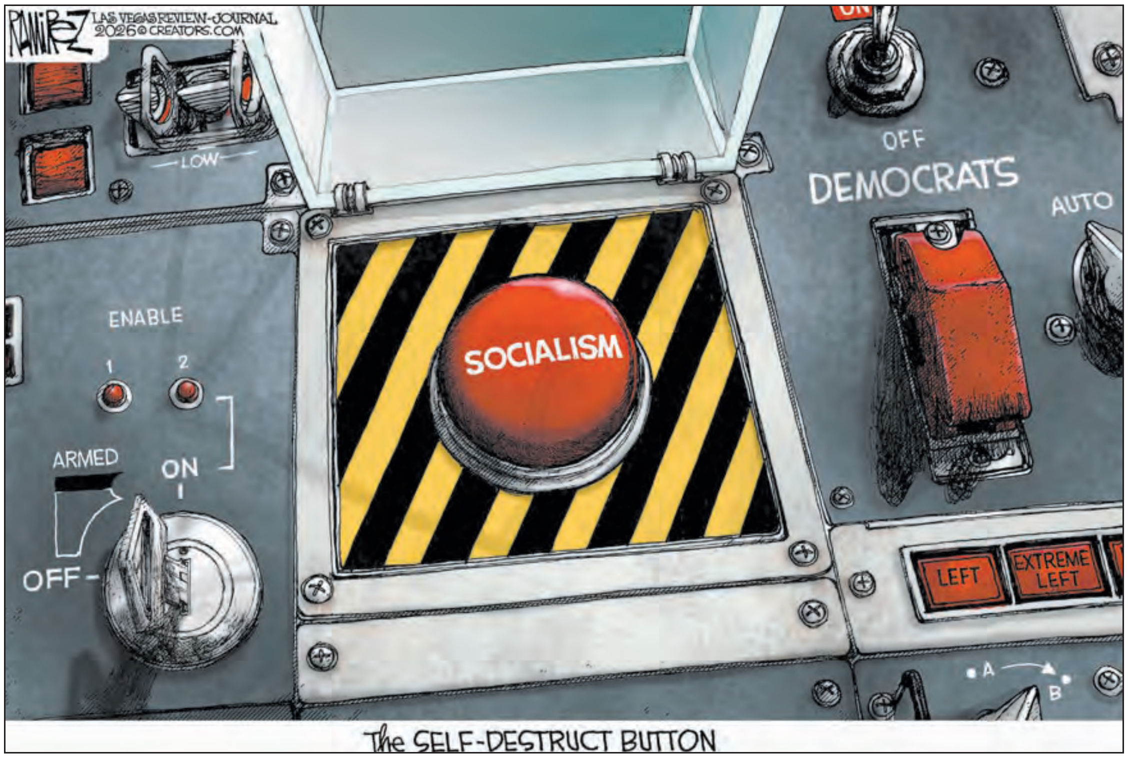

HOW ZO'S 'HELP' HURTS

NEW York City's new budget includes thousands of new rental-housing vouchers, billed as a means of helping low-income citizens remain in an increasingly unaffordable city. But this misguided compassion actually encourages poverty — by incentivizing low-income households to form in the first place, and to remain low-income for years on end.

That's largely because, unlike cash welfare, Gotham's housing handouts come with neither a work requirement nor a time limit, and pay 70% of rent for those eligible.

The new $175 million program will subsidize some 8,000 households. Yet debate over the program's cost ignores an inconvenient fact: The city *already* provides more housing vouchers than anywhere else in the US.

The expanded voucher program was deemed urgent by the supposedly moderate Menin. "Every New Yorker deserves a safe, affordable home," she declared.

But her enthusiasm overlooks the fact that the housing crisis she seeks to address hasn't been eased by the 119,000 federal housing vouchers the city's Housing Authority already distributes. Nor have the 39,000 vouchers given out by the city's Housing Preservation and Development agency made a dent.

Add in the city's 177,000 public housing units, and some 335,000 NYC households get housing help to pay just 30% of their income in rent. That's a substantial 14.5% of NYC rental housing of any kind .

And under the perverse incentives of voucher housing, the city's rules are actually worsening poverty — by encouraging the formation of more poor single-parent households. The Housing Authority operates a complex ranking system to qualify New Yorkers for either public housing or a voucher — a system it calls priority tiers.

The disabled and the elderly poor can go to the head of the line, as can households with extremely low incomes, from no income at all to 30% of the area's median. Those households are almost invariably headed by single parents, according to the data.

The city's voucher programs send a message: Single parents will get support. And because households headed by those as young as 18 can qualify for a voucher, those making life choices at a young age are getting that message loud and clear.

HOWARD HUSOCK

These endlessly generous vouchers are pulling the plug on what's widely known as the success sequence: finishing school, getting a job and then postponing childbearing until after marriage.

Other than the elderly, single adults with children are the largest group of voucher households — both in New York City and nationwide. Virtually all report "extremely low income" and have every incentive to continue that way.

The more they earn the more they pay in rent, because their rent is set at 30% of any income they make. And once in the system, they stay: The *average* voucher household has been subsidized for 14 years.

They're the same types of households living in the city's sprawling family-shelter system — who will get priority under the new council-backed voucher program. They are "homeless" not because they live on the street — street homeless tend to be single men — but because they'd otherwise be doubling up with their families.

So the city *encourages* the formation of independent but very low-income households: One can have a child at 16, move into a "youth crisis" shelter and go to the head of the line for a permanent voucher at age 18. That puts a hard stop to upward economic mobility.

Yet nationwide the Department of Housing and Urban Development is taking the opposite tack, encouraging cities to adopt work requirements and time limits for voucher households. That's because the idea is proven to work.

In affordability-challenged California, for example, the San Bernardino Housing Authority adopted a five-year time limit on housing assistance in 2012. The results have been striking: Income "at exit" has gone up 126%, those on public assistance declined from 343 to just six, and 18 former voucher families became homeowners. New York's many housing subsidy programs — including this latest one — instead help the poor stay stuck in poverty.

What's more, additional vouchers in a city with limited amounts of new housing will mean more demand chasing an ever-tighter supply. That's a recipe for a worsening affordability crunch, not a solution to it.

Menin's vouchers may seem compassionate, but they're actually blighting the life chances of those they seek to help.

Don't Let Socialists Prey on Our Apathy

ZOHRAN Mamdani and his cohort are just the first. America's commies — spearheaded by the Democratic Socialists of America — are running the same play across the nation that they've run in New York. Even in places you'd never expect, like my home in eastern Tennessee.

Their latest election success came in Colorado, where Gen Z socialist Melat Kiros ousted 15-term incumbent Rep. Diana DeGette (D-Col.) in last week's Democratic primary. It was another win for the cadre of far-left candidates who are much more radical — and much more anti-Israel — than the Democrats they're replacing.

Kiros benefited from the DSA's strategy of targeting low-turnout primary and local races to pick up seats using a disciplined voter-engagement machine. It's working.

GLENN HARLAN REYNOLDS

As The Post has reported, Zohran's candidates won their New York primaries with a single-digit percentage of registered voters — just 7% in the case of Darializa Avila Chevalier, who beat establishment Democrat Rep. Adriano Espaillat in last month's primary. "In some of these districts nobody votes, it's a very small turnout," said election expert JC Polanco.

The dirty secret — well, it's not *that* secret — of American democracy is that not many voters actually vote, especially in elections seen as local or minor. Avila Chevalier, for example, drew about 33,000 votes from her House district's 449,000 active voters.

Winning with 33,000 votes out of 449,000 seems crazy — but it's still winning. You run your campaign under the system that exists, and with low turnout, the ability to mobilize a relatively small number of reliable voters for your candidate is all you need.

> *If we don't want to be governed by the radical 7%, the rest of us better step up.*

All around the country, leftists are using a similar strategy — like here in Knoxville, Tenn. The town isn't very communist-friendly, but the Democratic candidate running to replace our term-limited county mayor is Beau Hawk, who is sort of East Tennessee's Graham Platner: A beefy guy who calls himself a workingman but is a lefty ideologue in reality.

Hawk once traveled to Venezuela for a march supporting then-dictator Nicolás Maduro, where he spoke with the "anti-imperialist" Orinoco Tribune and condemned President Trump's "lies about the Bolivarian Revolution." Hawk says he was "young and dumb" when he made the trip — it was in 2020, all of six years ago, but now he's mature enough to be mayor? — and that he was misquoted.

He may not win; while the city of Knoxville is blue, the outlying county is pretty red. But they're trying here, as they're trying all over.

And heck, he might pull it off. I did the math: If you could reliably get 500 people to pull up to the polls, you could win a lot of local races here. If you could get 5,000, you'd win *most* of them.

To do it you need a turnout operation, and the Knox County GOP — like the Tennessee GOP statewide — doesn't have much of one. The DSA is building one, in Knox County and elsewhere.

There's nothing illegal or illicit about targeting low-turnout races. And the DSA is smart about building loyalty: It doesn't just text people requests for donations, like establishment pols do. but hosts regular "team-building" events like beach days, running clubs, scavenger hunts, "NO ICE cream socials" and the like. Things that promote solidarity and that make people feel like they're letting down their friends if they skip Election Day.

But if we don't want to be governed by the radical 7%, the rest of us better step up. Make a point of voting in every election, and encourage (sane) friends and neighbors to, as well — even elections that are timed (deliberately) so that most people won't bother.

Local elections here are scheduled for the first Thursday in August, of all times. Once, that all but guaranteed the low turnout that only benefited incumbents, whose hangers-on could be counted on to show up. Now the leftists are taking advantage, bringing their own hangers-on — and more of them.

To short-circuit this dangerously effective strategy, we should consider ending incumbent-boosting low-turnout elections altogether. In my state there's a move to set local elections on the same date as statewide or national elections, boosting turnout and diluting the influence of special-interest groups.

Plato said the price of ignoring politics is to be ruled by idiots or evil men. And while you may not be interested in politics, politics is interested in you. Wherever you live in America, pay attention while you still can.

The Post Puzzle Page

SCRABBLE GRAMS

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I1 O1 W4 L1 R1 G2 C3 — Triple Word Score — RACK 1

A1 E1 I1 O1 M3 H4 B3 — RACK 2

A1 E1 I1 T1 R1 R1 B3 — 3rd Letter Double — RACK 3

A1 A1 O1 K5 C3 J8 L1 — RACK 4

PAR SCORE 155-165
BEST SCORE 234

FOUR RACK TOTAL ____
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

TODAY'S ANSWER

SCRABBLE GRAMS SOLUTION

C3 O1 W4 G2 I1 R1 L1	RACK 1 =	89
B3 O1 H4 E1 M3 I1 A1	RACK 2 =	64
A1 R1 B3 I1 T1 E1 R1	RACK 3 =	62
J8 A1 C3 K5 A1 L1	RACK 4 =	19
PAR SCORE 155-165	TOTAL	234

Directions: Make a 2 to 7 letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word using scoring directions at right. 7 Letter words get 50 point bonus. "Blank" used as any letter have no point value. All the words are in the Official SCRABBLE players Dictionary, 4th Edition.

Bridge

South dealer
N-S vulnerable

NORTH
♠ A 9 5 3
♡ 8 7 4
◇ K J 10 6
♣ 7 5

WEST
♠ Q J 10
♡ Q 9 6
◇ 7 3
♣ K 9 8 3 2

EAST
♠ 4
♡ A 10 5 3 2
◇ 9 5 2
♣ Q 10 6 4

SOUTH
♠ K 8 7 6 2
♡ K J
◇ A Q 8 4
♣ A J

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
2NT	Pass	4 ♠	All Pass

Opening lead – ♠ Q

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Procrastination, from the Latin "cras," for tomorrow.

A moralizer might say procrastination is the fertilizer that makes troubles grow. He probably wouldn't make today's game, and the actual declarer didn't either. Against four spades, West led the queen of trumps, and declarer took the A-K without delay. He cashed his diamond tricks, but West declined to ruff with his high trump.

South next led a heart from dummy, and when East played low, South huddled and played the jack. West took the queen, cashed his high trump and returned a heart to East's ace, and the defense also got a club for down one.

South has a much better chance if he doesn't take his second high trump. At Trick Two he leads a club to his jack.

West takes the king and leads the jack of trumps, and declarer wins, cashes his ace of clubs and starts the diamonds. If West doesn't ruff, South exits with a trump, and West must lead a heart, resolving South's guess there, or concede a ruff-sluff.

Word Force

GRANDEE

From the word or phrase above, form **AT LEAST 12** five-letter words, without using more than one form of the same word. For example, drink or drank (not both).

ANSWERS IN TOMORROW'S POST
Yesterday's word:
PUREBRED

breed
drupe
duper
erred
prude
puree
purer
redub
ruder
rupee

Wonderword

How to play: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **Circle their letters only. Do not circle the word.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

SINGING BIRDS **Solution: 11 letters**

S	L	S	P	A	R	R	O	W	A	R	B	L	E	R
R	E	A	B	R	E	E	D	I	N	G	W	R	E	N
L	E	R	N	D	S	S	P	R	I	N	G	L	N	S
A	L	G	E	I	I	R	B	V	B	D	A	T	G	G
C	U	E	A	N	D	R	E	C	O	X	U	S	H	N
I	F	C	A	N	A	R	Y	H	R	C	B	E	T	I
P	I	I	Ⓔ	N	A	D	A	I	T	A	A	N	T	W
O	T	Ⓝ	C	N	N	T	E	C	C	A	G	L	H	F
R	Ⓤ	H	G	N	O	S	P	K	U	A	E	I	G	L
Ⓣ	A	E	Y	S	W	S	Y	A	R	C	S	F	I	O
H	E	R	R	E	P	A	A	D	R	T	K	S	A	W
R	B	U	E	E	R	T	E	E	L	R	T	O	L	E
U	E	T	E	D	I	N	L	E	S	E	O	E	O	R
S	A	A	V	S	H	P	L	A	N	T	S	T	U	S
H	K	N	M	O	C	K	I	N	G	B	I	R	D	S

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Backyard, Beak, Beautiful, Branch, Breeding, Canary, Cardinal, Chickadee, Chirp, Cuckoo, Duet, Feathers, Feeder, Flowers, Garden, Listen, Loud, Mockingbirds, Nature, Nest, Parrot, Plants, Relax, Robin, Season, Seeds, Serenade, Song, Sparrow, Spring, Sweet, Tanager, Thrush, Tree, Tropical, Tune, Veery, Vocal, Warbler, Whistle, Wings, Wren

Yesterday's Answer: Exercises

For **WONDERWORD** apps, books & more, visit Wonderword.com, or call 1-855-232-2367.

POST SU DOKU

To solve a Su Doku, you must put a number from 1 to 9, in each empty box.

Each number must appear once in each horizontal row, as well as in each vertical column and in each of the 3-by-3 grids. Impossible? Not once you get the hang of it. Tips and in depth strategies at

www.SudokuWiki.org

PLAY MORE GAMES!
NYPOST.COM/GAMES

Solutions on Page 33

© Syndicated Puzzles

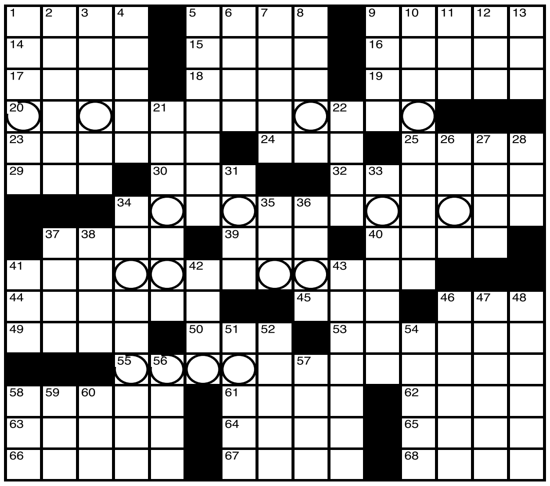
Very Easy #7,332

6	8		1					3
			6	2	5	7		4
2				7				1
	1			3			4	
		3	2		9	8		
	6			1			9	
7				5				8
8		5	4	6	3			
3					1		5	2

Difficult #7,122

6		4	9					
1			2			5		
	8						3	
			4		2			
	4						5	7
			3		6			
	1						9	
		3			9			1
2					5	7		4

Quick Crossword



Across
1 Baked desserts
5 "Shoot!"
9 Threaded fastener
14 Kendrick of "Pitch Perfect"
15 Learning by memorization
16 Throw with effort
17 A little naughty
18 Big brass horn
19 Prodded
20 Question, as the opposing side's witness
23 Location of all but two NATO members
24 Overly
25 Covered in cinders
29 Cell service letters
30 List-ending abbr.
32 Giants legend Mays
34 Settings that reinforce personal biases
37 Breathe hard
39 Language similar to Thai
40 Fashioned
41 Tool for monitoring blood sugar levels
44 Stop working
45 Icarus, to Daedalus
46 The first "A" of Reddit's AMA
49 Landfill output
50 Some short albums
53 No longer surprised by
55 Classic Beatles song, or an apt description of the progression of this puzzle's circles
58 Was able to
61 Comedian Trevor
62 "Take this"
63 Possessed
64 Sushi seaweed
65 Zone
66 Trudges heavily
67 "What __ is new?"
68 Element seen all over Las Vegas

Down
1 Package
2 Bored by routine
3 "Do it again!"
4 Authorization
5 The Electric Mayhem bandleader
6 Common sauce base
7 Facing the pitcher
8 Spanish "I love you"
9 Give the cold shoulder
10 Individually wrapped breakfast choice
11 Cleaning cloth
12 Night of anticipation
13 Hitched
21 Ronnie who sang lead on "Be My Baby"
22 Corn Belt state
26 Luge or skeleton
27 Add to the staff
28 Desired response to a promposal
31 Kenneth of fashion
33 Gigantic
34 Surrounded
35 Pic taker
36 Weeding tools
37 Claimed no contest, maybe
38 Prefix with correct or complete
41 Miracle-__: garden brand
42 Appear to be
43 Difficult question
46 Show some stick-to-itiveness?
47 Audiophile's system
48 Like BTS or bibimbap
51 Tubular pasta
52 Perch at a pub
54 Hawke of "Before Sunrise"
56 Action figures?
57 Rowboat pair
58 Many a "Brooklyn Nine-Nine" character
59 Bird in Tootsie Pop ads
60 Game with Reverse cards

C	H	I	C	■	G	U	T	S	■	S	A	R	G	E
L	O	G	O	■	O	G	R	E	■	A	B	O	R	T
I	P	O	S	■	E	G	A	N	■	Y	E	T	I	S
P	E	R	M	I	S	S	I	O	N	S	L	I	P	■
■	■	■	I	M	P	■	T	R	E	Y	■	■	■	■
■	O	C	C	U	R	S	■	■	S	O	B	E	I	T
O	R	R	■	P	O	W	E	R	T	U	M	B	L	E
N	C	I	S	■	■	A	A	A	■	■	W	I	I	S
C	A	M	P	I	N	G	T	R	I	P	■	K	A	T
E	S	P	A	N	A	■	■	E	N	S	U	E	D	■
■	■	■	■	B	R	A	G	■	T	E	N	■	■	■
■	F	A	L	L	C	O	L	L	E	C	T	I	O	N
C	A	C	A	O	■	R	U	I	N	■	A	C	L	U
I	N	T	R	O	■	T	E	E	D	■	P	E	A	T
A	S	S	A	M	■	A	D	D	S	■	E	D	Y	S

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

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Dow Jones Indust. Avg. Up 155.84 53,055.91

Nasdaq Comp. Up 288.49 26,121.16

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Marts surge

Wall Street surged Monday and oil prices settled around pre-Iran war levels, as investors eyed new developments in the AI and chipmaker sector ahead of corporate earnings. The Nasdaq surged 1.1% while the Dow added 0.3%.

Guidance tip

Forward guidance can be a "valuable tool" that speeds the impact of monetary policy under the right circumstances, although it can be a problem when used inflexibly, Federal Reserve Governor Christopher Waller said Monday.

$19B contract

TeraWulf said Monday it signed a 20-year lease with Anthropic for data-center infrastructure, a deal expected to generate about $19 billion in contracted revenue.

Ford tech deal

Micron Technology and Ford on Monday signed a long-term agreement to secure the supply for memory and storage platforms used in the automaker's next-generation vehicle production.

Rivian offer

Rivian on Monday launched a 75-million-share public offering, while the electric-vehicle maker forecast second-quarter revenue above analysts' estimates.

Sources: Reuters

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DON'S 'BIT' OF BOOST

Crypto coin bump after Trump Account comments

By TAYLOR HERZLICH

Bitcoin bounced back Monday after President Trump called himself "a big crypto guy" and gave a positive, if noncommittal, answer when asked about the prospect of digital assets becoming part of his newly launched Trump Accounts.

Prior to those remarks, the cryptocurrency fell as much as 2% toward $60,000 after filings revealed Strategy, the largest corporate holder of bitcoin, sold $216 million worth last week — abandoning co-founder Michael Saylor's pledge to "never sell your Bitcoin."

Bitcoin later rose 0.4% to $63,822, reversing those losses after Trump boasted about his crypto-friendly administration, although it's still far below its record high of more than $126,000 last year.

Asked at an Oval Office press conference whether bitcoin could become part of Trump Accounts, the president answered, "I've become a big crypto guy."

He went on to explain there's "only one reason" for that stance, saying, "If we don't have it, China's going to have it, and they would like to have it. But now they're not even trying that hard, because we've taken over."

Kid program launches

The tax-advantaged 503A accounts known as Trump Accounts launched over the holiday weekend, seeded with $1,000 for US children born between Jan. 1, 2025, and Dec. 31, 2028. They are an attempt to help American kids build savings over a lifetime by investing in broad-market exchange-traded funds.

During his remarks on crypto, Trump jabbed at the Biden administration's strict regulatory enforcement on the industry.

"Every time I see a crypto guy where they dropped an investigation I said, 'You are lucky I'm president!'" Trump said.

The Securities and Exchange Commission abruptly dropped its investigations into Robinhood and Coinbase's trading practices in February 2025, soon after Trump returned to the Oval Office.

"Crypto has a tremendous audience. So, yeah, I'm very much for crypto," he said, stopping short of committing to make the asset part of Trump Accounts. The president recently faced criticism over his annual financial disclosures for 2025, which revealed he made $1 billion in cryptocurrency income.

He earned more than $600 million from his personalized meme coins while investors in the $Trump coin lost $3.81 billion, according to The New York Times.

Slumping since May

"We're all profiting," Trump said last week of his profits. "I'm profiting because I have a lot of money and a lot of cash."

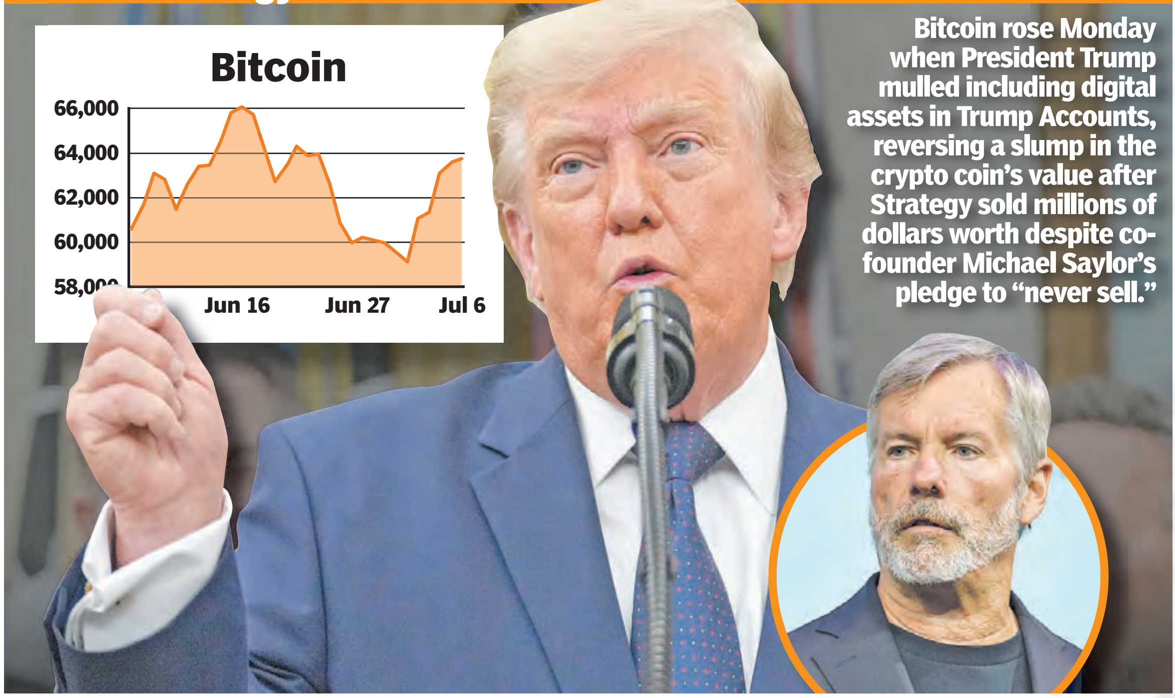
His remarks Monday helped boost sentiment among crypto investors after weeks of brutal trading.

Bitcoin has been on the downturn since Strategy — a leading so-called "crypto treasury" company — sold about $2.5 million worth of bitcoin in May, a sharp reversal from its yearslong trading philosophy.

Financial disclosures Monday showed Strategy last week sold another $216 million of bitcoin, a signal that it is truly abandoning its "never sell" pledge amid a slumping digital asset market.

It marked the company's largest bitcoin sale since it started building up its massive holdings in 2020, and only its third sale overall as it makes a hard pivot to a more flexible investment strategy,— concerning investors who went all-in on crypto.

Hurtful Strategy



Bitcoin rose Monday when President Trump mulled including digital assets in Trump Accounts, reversing a slump in the crypto coin's value after Strategy sold millions of dollars worth despite co-founder Michael Saylor's pledge to "never sell."

Getty Images/AP Photo/Mark Schiefelbein

Walmart drops prices at WH's request

President Trump said on Monday that Walmart would lower prices on many products, including ground beef, after a request from his administration.

The retailer said customers would save on items including meat, produce and soda at its Walmart and Sam's Club stores this summer.

Record-high beef prices have strained the wallets of US consumers who also paid much higher gasoline prices after the US and Israel launched attacks on Iran in February.

Prices for steaks and hamburger meat soared after a persistent drought burned pasture lands and hiked costs of cattle feed, forcing US ranchers to slash their herds. Economists have said it will take years to rebuild the herd to expand domestic beef supplies.

Trump said Walmart will drop prices on a pound of ground beef by "almost" 15% after his administration made a request to coincide with the nation's 250th birthday.

Walmart said that the price of one pound of 73% ground beef roll would drop to $5.94 from $6.74 in its stores, a decline of about 12%. It also said it lowered prices on items including Coca-Cola and PepsiCo sodas and chips. *Reuters*

US to get more Toyota jobs

Toyota said Monday it would build a new $3.6 billion plant in Texas and shift some truck production to the US from Mexico.

The automaker, run by Kenta Kon (right), said the new 2.5-million-square-foot building will be located on its San Antonio manufacturing campus and will open by 2030, creating 2,000 jobs. The car company said it will move production of its mid-size Tacoma pickup truck from a Baja California plant to the Texas plant when completed.

Toyota will continue to build Tacoma trucks at its Guanajuato plant in central Mexico. Toyota already produces Tundra trucks and SUVs at its existing San Antonio assembly plant on the site where the new plant will be built and a new 500,000-square-foot rear axle plant is set to open in the autumn.

President Trump has pressured automakers to move more auto production to the US and has hiked tariffs on autos, steel, aluminum and parts.

Toyota said it remains committed to its operations throughout Mexico, Canada and the US and urged Trump to extend a North American free trade deal that automakers say is critical to integrated auto production.

In 2020, Toyota moved Tacoma production from San Antonio to Guanajuato, joining the Baja plant. *Reuters*

Takeover takeoff

easyJet stox up 9.3% after buyout bid OK

By TAYLOR HERZLICH

Shares of easyJet soared Monday after the UK budget airline agreed to a $7.3 billion takeover proposal from US private-equity firm Castlelake, as low-cost carriers face a major jet fuel crunch.

The airline announced Sunday that it had accepted a £5.5 billion offer from Castlelake, after rejecting four previous bids from the asset manager, including a £4.93 billion ($6.5 billion) proposal last month.

London-listed shares in easyJet ended 9.3% higher Monday.

Castlelake has until Aug. 3 to finalize the offer, which represents a cash bid of $6.90 a share, or scrap the deal altogether.

Airlines, particularly low-budget carriers operating on tight margins, have faced immense pressure amid the Iran war, which blocked the Strait of Hormuz for weeks.

The maritime route typically transports about 40% of Europe's jet fuel supply, and its blockage more than doubled fuel costs for European airlines.

The International Air Transport Association has warned that global airlines could see their profits halved this year as a result.

In its half-year earnings, reported in May, easyJet said it suffered a pre-tax loss of £552 million for the six months ending March 31, despite seeing a 12% rise in revenue to £4 billion ($5.28 billion).

"In discussions between the parties, Castlelake has emphasised its tremendous respect for easyJet and its people, along with its intention to support its future growth and transformation to a stronger, more resilient European airline for the benefit of all stakeholders if the transaction proceeds to completion," easyJet and Castlelake said Sunday in a joint statement.

"Castlelake is supportive of easyJet's fleet modernisation programme, which it regards as central to the company's long-term competitiveness, efficiency and sustainability objectives."

The "no frills" airline is known for its bright orange fleet and for operating out of major airports like London's Gatwick and Charles de Gaulle in Paris.

Like other budget airlines, easyJet charges extra fees for checked bags, seat selection and in-flight meals.

therzlich@nypost.com

Fueling a resurgence

easyJet
$7.3B

Like other budget airlines, easyJet has been slammed by jet fuel delivery headaches, but its acceptance of a buyout offer from an equity fund sent its share price up.

Adobe

$10B deal for Crinetics

Vertex Pharmaceuticals will buy Crinetics Pharmaceuticals for a total equity value of about $10 billion, the companies said Monday.

The acquisition gives Vertex access to Palsonify, which was approved by the Food and Drug Administration last September to treat adults with acromegaly, a rare hormonal disorder caused by excess growth hormone. The companies said the once-daily oral therapy has shown early commercial momentum since launch.

Crinetics' experimental drug, atumelnant, is in late-stage development for congenital adrenal hyperplasia, or CAH, a rare genetic disorder affecting the adrenal glands.

Vertex will pay $85 per Crinetics share, the companies said, with the deal expected to close in the third quarter of this year. *Reuters*

Lockheed into naval tech

Lockheed Martin will buy naval defense company Ultra Maritime from private-equity firm Advent for $3.45 billion, bolstering its portfolio as global demand for military technology surges.

After the closing of the deal, which was announced on Monday, Ultra Maritime will become a part of Lockheed's rotary and mission systems, which reported revenue of $17.3 billion in 2025 and employs 35,000 people worldwide.

Sustained conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East, as well as President Trump's $1.5 trillion defense budget request for 2027, are driving up demand for weapons and military technology, pushing defense contractors to expand their capabilities.

Ultra Maritime specializes in anti-submarine warfare and undersea defense technologies. *Reuters*

SK chip shares in US sale

South Korean chipmaker SK Hynix on Monday launched a US share sale to raise $28.07 billion and drew indications of interest for up to $7 billion from major investors, as it capitalizes on the global AI boom with one of the world's largest new share sales.

Baillie Gifford Overseas, investment funds managed by Coatue Management and Situational Awareness Partners, have each separately indicated interest in buying up to a combined $7 billion worth of SK Hynix's American depositary receipts, or ADRs, SK Hynix said.

Baillie Gifford Overseas declined to comment, while Coatue Management and Situational Awareness Partners did not respond to requests for comment.

The company will sell 17.79 million new shares through the ADRs on the Nasdaq; 10 ADRs will represent one common share and a Monday filing gave a reference price of 242,500 won per ADR, based on SK Hynix's July 3 closing price in Seoul.

The deal comes as Asian chip companies tap strong global demand for AI-related stocks. Taiwan's Unimicron Technology is also seeking to raise about $1.4 billion through a sale of global depositary shares, or shares listed overseas that represent its local stock. *Reuters*

United loses window suit

A federal judge Monday rejected United Airlines' bid to dismiss a lawsuit by passengers who complained they paid extra money to sit in window seats, only to discover their seats had no windows.

District Judge James Donato in San Francisco rejected United's defense that "window" referred to the location of a seat relative to the cabin wall and aisle, and that the carrier never contractually promised that seats in the window position would have views outside. *Reuters*

ELON MUSK
Twitter toss failure.

Elon's nix verdict bid KO'd

A federal judge Monday rejected Elon Musk's bid to void a jury verdict finding that the world's richest person defrauded Twitter investors by trying to drive down the social-media company's stock price after agreeing to a $44 billion takeover.

District Judge Charles Breyer in San Francisco also denied Musk's motion to decertify the class of investors, and granted the investors' motion for prejudgment interest. The judge did find Musk not liable for one of his challenged tweets.

Investors accused Musk of falsely suggesting that Twitter was overrun by fake and spam accounts, known as bots, to force the company to renegotiate his offer or let him back out. They said it caused losses when they sold shares at depressed prices.

A lawyer for the investors estimated that Musk could owe $2.6 billion in damages following the March 20 verdict. *Reuters*

More MAXs for Boeing

Boeing plans to begin operating a fourth 737 MAX assembly line at its factory located in Everett, Wash.

The new line is part of the planemaker's long-term plans to significantly increase output of its popular single-aisle jetliner to keep up with historically high global demand for jet airplanes.

The start comes as Boeing ramps 737 production from 42 to 47 jets a month after consulting with the Federal Aviation Administration. *Reuters*

X'ED OUT AT XBOX

Vid game unit to lose 20% in Microsoft cuts

By MARC VARTABEDIAN

Microsoft is axing 4,800 employees, most of them from its Xbox division, as it and the rest of the tech industry seek to adapt to the AI era.

The cuts come as the software giant has heavily invested in artificial intelligence after years of pouring cash into gaming.

"Our business is changing because the world around it is changing. The way technology is built, deployed, and used is transforming faster than at any point in my time here," Amy Coleman, Microsoft's chief people officer, wrote in a Monday memo to employees.

The layoffs included 1,600 Xbox employees who were immediately let go, with another 1,600 set to be axed over the rest of Microsoft's fiscal year, according to Xbox Chief Executive Asha Sharma.

"Our business today is not healthy," she wrote employees, going on to list challenges like slow growth.

"We are operating at margins that are 3-10x lower than comparable platform and publishing businesses," Sharma added. "We must reset Xbox."

Microsoft — which became a dominant force in the video game arena with the landmark launch of the Xbox in 2001 — is also selling or spinning off four game development studios and weighing strategic options for a fifth, according to Sharma.

Latest tech troubles

The cuts account for 2.1% of Microsoft's global workforce and one-fifth of Xbox staffers.

AI has been blamed for layoffs throughout the tech sector, which saw its worst start to the year in terms of employment since 2023. The first three months of 2026 brought 52,050 tech layoffs — a 40% jump from the same period last year, according to executive coaching firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas — with AI increasingly being blamed for the cuts.

The soon-to-be axed employees won't actually be replaced by AI, Coleman said.

"At the same time, what is true is that AI is changing how work gets done. Some of the tasks we do every day can now be automated, and that means we all need to keep learning, keep building new skills, and keep adapting as the work evolves," she said.

Microsoft stock ended nearly 1% lower Monday.

Microsoft, along with rivals Sony and Nintendo, has jacked up prices for its Xbox consoles amid a global memory chip shortage caused by seemingly bottomless demand for powerful chips from the AI sector.

The video game industry has faced waves of layoffs over the past two years after companies including Microsoft ramped up hiring during the COVID pandemic. That growth slowed once pandemic restrictions ended.

Microsoft bought game makers such as Activision Blizzard to strengthen Game Pass, its Netflix-style subscription service. Sharma acknowledged in the memo that Game Pass "did not grow at the pace we expected."

Xbox revenue fell 5% in the quarter ended in March compared with a year earlier. The division's profit margin for the fiscal year ended in June was 3%, down from the previous year.

Game over

Xbox CEO Asha Sharma (inset) said Microsoft's video game unit must be "reset," including big job cuts and the sale or spinoff of at least four game development studios.

> **"Our business today is not healthy."**
> *—Xbox CEO Asha Sharma*

LAYOFFS

3,200 Xbox employees
1,600 other Microsoft employees

Bloomberg via Getty, Adobe

Solstice to buy Element

Solstice Advanced Materials said it will buy peer specialty chemical company Element Solutions in a $14.5 billion deal, as it seeks to capitalize on growing demand from AI data centers and the chip industries.

The deal would create a larger supplier of materials used in semiconductor manufacturing, electronics and industrial applications, combining Solstice's refrigerants, specialty materials and uranium-conversion business with Element's electronics chemicals portfolio.

Element shareholders will receive $10 in cash and 0.5 share of Solstice common stock for each share held. *Reuters*

Investors for quarterly reports

The investment industry is urging the Securities and Exchange Commission to stick to its practice of requiring quarterly reporting from publicly traded companies, according to the balance of public comment letters available Monday.

Responses to a proposal to let companies opt for semiannual reporting underscored a divide between investor calls for more disclosure and corporate boardrooms' hope to be free of earnings-season pressures.

Investors say their need for corporate disclosures to make investment decisions outweighs any benefit from eased reporting burdens on companies, which must pay to tabulate and audit their operating results every three months, comment letters and public statements showed.

The SEC in May proposed allowing US-listed companies to switch to semiannual reporting. *Reuters*

Classifieds

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LEGAL NOTICES

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NOTICE OF TEMPORARY DEVIATION FROM USCG REGULATIONS
EFFECTIVE FROM 21:15 ON JULY 10, 2026 THROUGH 22:45 ON JULY 10, 2026, (RAIN DATE: JULY 11, 2026) THE LONG BEACH BRIDGE WILL REMAIN IN THE CLOSED POSITION.

YONKERS RACEWAY ENTRIES FOR TUESDAY

FIRST: 1 Mile $18,000 FM20000CLM; PACE

1	Sunburnt	(CKelly)	3-5-4	6-1
2	Thats A Huge Beach	(DDube)	6-7-4	20-1
3	Iris Seelster	(ASiegelman)	5-3-8	12-1
4	Remi Lou A	(JBongiorno)	6-2-2	3-1
5	Ideal Skies	(JBartlett)	2-2-6	7-5
6	Pull Me Through	(JStratton)	5-5-7	20-1
7	Yuengling	(BHolland)	6-2-1	6-1
8	Quick Menu	(JMarohn)	4-4-6	20-1

SECOND: 1 Mile $23,000 NW15000L5; PACE

1	Hickfromfrenchlick	(BHollnd)	8-1-4	8-1
2	None Bettor A	(MKakaley)	6-4-2	6-1
3	Th Colby	(TButer)	2-3-3	8-5
4	Nandolo N	(LTritton)	2-7-5	5-1
5	Speculating A	(JBartlett)	5-8-3	9-2
6	Mac's Marvel	(PLachance)	6-6-1	15-1
7	Udderly SweetA	(JBongiorno)	4-1-X	6-1
8	Bettor Not	(DDube)	4-3-4	20-1

THIRD: 1 Mile $24,000 FM50000CLM; PACE

1	Petrol Queen	(CKelly)	2-8-3	4-1
2	Splash Of Pink	(DDube)	3-3-6	12-1
3	Maddie's Delite	(BHolland)	6-3-1	5-2
4	Over Ice	(JBartlett)	4-7-3	3-1
5	Mc Angel	(JStratton)	1-1-1	3-1
6	Ultimate Speed	(MKakaley)	2-3-2	6-1

FOURTH: 1 Mile $28,000 NW23101L5; PACE

1	Kwick Sand A	(JStratton)	3-2-1	6-1
2	Forward Flash	(PLachance)	6-1-1	8-1
3	Downbythewater	(JBartlett)	2-1-4	9-5
4	AyeAyeCaptainN	(VGinsburg)	2-5-7	7-2
5	Always A Thrill	(MKakaley)	8-1-4	6-1
6	Banderas	(TButer)	1-7-4	9-2
7	Federer	(JBongiorno)	5-4-3	20-1

FIFTH: 1 Mile $23,000 NW15000L5; PACE

1	PanettoneHanover	(JBongrn)	6-6-1	7-2
2	Paris's Dragon	(TButer)	3-1-2	5-2
3	CoalfordTopguyGb	(JBartlett)	8-2-3	9-2
4	Aroda N	(LTritton)	1-2-2	3-1
5	HezaChrttpperA	(ASegelmn)	7-5-6	8-1
6	Jett Star N	(JMarohn)	8-4-6	20-1
7	Boston Bound	(BHolland)	6-5-6	15-1
8	Printville	(JStratton)	7-2-3	20-1

SIXTH: 1 Mile $19,000 CHGNW2PM; PACE

1	Whiskey Venom	(JBartlett)	6-4-3	9-2
2	Moonshiner N	(JBongiorno)	2-1-4	9-5
3	Ozzies CrazyTrain	(JStratton)	5-1-4	10-1
4	Enrique Hanover	(BHolland)	4-1-2	6-1
5	Killer Bee Deo	(JMarohn)	1-4-5	9-2
6	Half Past Midnight	(CKelly)	6-8-1	12-1
7	Darknstormy Deo	(MKakaley)	1-10-3	8-1
8	Captain Amore N	(TButer)	4-5-X	20-1

SEVENTH: 1 Mile $19,000 NW8551L5; PACE

1	SumomentsmwhereA	(TBter)	3-4-9	5-2
2	Shipmaster	(MKakaley)	2-4-3	4-1
3	Marlbank Road	(JMarohn)	7-6-6	20-1
4	Dele Row A	(BHolland)	4-5-7	2-1
5	Finvarra A	(JBartlett)	3-3-7	5-2
6	Levine	(PLachance)	4-6-2	20-1
7	Rusty Beach	(TMerton)	2-6-3	20-1

EIGHTH: 1 Mile $21,000 HGW2BN4PM; PACE

1	AdamCheesehead	(MKakley)	2-3-2	2-1
2	Fearless Partners	(CKelly)	4-6-2	5-2
3	Ragnar Lothbrok N	(JBartlett)	1-2-2	3-1
4	Always Bet On Me	(TButer)	1-2-5	9-2
5	Farkle	(TMerton)	3-5-4	20-1
6	Alabama Lucky	(BHolland)	5-1-2	12-1
7	HurricneExpress	(ASegelmn)	4-6-5	20-1
8	Rodeo Cowboy	(GBrennan)	4-5-7	20-1

NINTH: 1 Mile $28,000 NW20000L5; PACE

1	Rocket City A	(PLachance)	4-4-7	15-1
2	Matai Phil N	(BHolland)	3-2-1	7-2
3	Mac's Delight	(JBartlett)	1-5-2	5-2
4	Laser Speed	(CKelly)	5-1-5	6-1
5	Moment Is Here	(TButer)	1-2-3	3-1
6	SohoDowJonesA	(JBongiorn)	7-6-1	10-1
7	Jabbar	(JStratton)	2-4-3	8-1
8	Better B Bold	(MKakaley)	2-4-1	15-1

TENTH: 1 Mile $15,000 NW5051L5; PACE

1	Southwind Celsius	(TButer)	6-4-6	5-2
2	Six Degrees	(CKelly)	4-7-7	5-2
3	Hp Momentum	(JMarohn)	3-4-6	20-1
4	Discoveringthehunt	(BHllnd)	6-6-2	10-1
5	Just Enuff Stuff	(JBartlett)	3-5-5	8-5
6	All Alone	(MKakaley)	7-6-5	20-1
7	Kimble A	(GBrennan)	5-6-7	20-1
8	Casino Action N	(VGinsburg)	5-5-4	20-1

PGA Tour Statistics

Through Sunday
FedExCup Season Points
1, Scottie Scheffler, 3,511. 2, Matt Fitzpatrick, 3,195. 3, Cameron Young, 2,586. 4, Wyndham Clark, 2,199. 5, Collin Morikawa, 2,176. 6, Chris Gotterup, 2,132. 7, Si Woo Kim, 1,860. 8, Ludvig Aberg, 1,773. 9, Sam Burns, 1,728. 10, Akshay Bhatia, 1,723.
Scoring Average
1, Scottie Scheffler, 68.901. 2, Collin Morikawa, 69.533. 3, Matt Fitzpatrick, 69.621. 4, Jake Knapp, 69.795. 5, Sam Burns, 69.908. 6, Wyndham Clark, 69.938. 7, Tommy Fleetwood, 69.943. 8, Chris Gotterup, 69.945. 9, Cameron Young, 69.971. 10, Ludvig Åberg, 70.014.
Driving Distance
1, Aldrich Potgieter, 329.8. 2, Michael Brennan, 326.1. 3, Gary Woodland, 322.4. 4, Nicolai Højgaard, 322.1. 5, Chris Gotterup, 321.5. 6, Rasmus Højgaard, 321.4. 7, Marco Penge, 320.8. 8, Min Woo Lee, 320.2. 9, Johnny Keefer, 318.4. 10, Jake Knapp, 317.7.
Driving Accuracy Percentage
1, Russell Henley, 73.41%. 2, Aaron Rai, 72.43%. 3, Si Woo Kim, 70.10%. 4, Lucas Glover, 69.65%. 5, Andrew Putnam, 69.53%. 6, Tommy Fleetwood, 69.44%. 7, Collin Morikawa, 69.41%. 8, Matt Fitzpatrick, 68.90%. 9, Corey Conners, 68.78%. 10, Emiliano Grillo, 68.24%.
Greens in Regulation Percentage
1, 10 tied with .00%.
Total Driving
1, Ludvig Åberg, 46. 2, Scottie Scheffler, 51. 3, Kurt Kitayama, 58. 4, Neal Shipley, 59. 5, Michael Brennan, 63. 6, Min Woo Lee, 68. 7, Jordan Smith, 73. 8 (tie), William Mouw and Cameron Young, 76. 10, 2 tied with 77.
SG-Putting
1, Vince Whaley, .825. 2, Jake Knapp, .698. 3, Akshay Bhatia, .681. 4, Jacob Bridgeman, .675. 5, Sam Burns, .662. 6, Harris English, .581. 7, Erik van Rooyen, .574. 8, Eric Cole, .568. 9, Beau Hossler, .567. 10, Alex Noren, .563.
Birdie Average
1, Scottie Scheffler, 4.82. 2 (tie), Si Woo Kim and Collin Morikawa, 4.59. 4, Wyndham Clark, 4.55. 5, Ludvig Åberg, 4.39. 6, Akshay Bhatia, 4.35. 7, Robert MacIntyre, 4.34. 8, Jacob Bridgeman, 4.33. 9, Keith Mitchell, 4.32. 10, Eric Cole, 4.31.
Eagles (Holes per)
1, Jake Knapp, 48. 2, Nicolai Højgaard, 77.5. 3, Matt Wallace, 81. 4, Sahith Theegala, 83.3. 5, Aldrich Potgieter, 84.6. 6, Tommy Fleetwood, 88.4. 7 (tie), Keegan Bradley, Shane Lowry and Brandt Snedeker, 90. 10, Max Greyserman, 93.6.
Sand Save Percentage
1, 10 tied with .00%.
All-Around Ranking
1, Scottie Scheffler, 160. 2, Ludvig Åberg, 224. 3, Sam Burns, 249. 4, Wyndham Clark, 254. 5, Collin Morikawa, 272. 6, Chris Gotterup, 277. 7, Doug Ghim, 281. 8, Jake Knapp, 323. 9, Si Woo Kim, 325. 10, Tommy Fleetwood, 327.

PGA Tour Schedule

April 16-19 — RBC Heritage (Matt Fitzpatrick)
April 23-26 — Zurich Classic of New Orleans (A.Fitzpatrick/M.Fitzpatrick)
April 30-May 3 — Cadillac Championship (Cameron Young)
May 7-10 — Truist Championship (Kristoffer Reitan)
May 7-10 — ONEflight Myrtle Beach Classic (Brandt Snedeker)
May 14-17 — PGA Championship (Aaron Rai)
May 21-24 — THE CJ CUP Byron Nelson (Wyndham Clark)
May 28-31 — Charles Schwab Challenge (Russell Henley)
June 4-7 — the Memorial Tournament presented by Workday (J.T. Poston)
June 11-14 — RBC Canadian Open (Bud Cauley)
June 18-21 — U.S. Open (Wyndham Clark)
June 25-29 — Travelers Championship (Viktor Hovland)
July 2-5 — John Deere Classic (Chris Gotterup)
July 9-12 — Genesis Scottish Open, North Berwick, United Kingdom
July 9-12 — ISCO Championship, Louisville, Ky.
July 16-19 — The Open Championship, Southport, United Kingdom

Yonkers racing canceled Monday

Wimbledon

At All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club; London; Purse: €30,060,000; Surface: Grass; Monday (seedings in parentheses):
Men's Singles - Fourth Round
Flavio Cobolli (9), Italy, def. Alex de Minaur (5), Australia, 7-5, 7-6 (4), 6-3.
Taylor Fritz (6), United States, def. Alexander Bublik (10), Kazakhstan, 7-6 (1), 6-4, 6-4.
Arthur Fery, Britain, def. Grigor Dimitrov, Bulgaria, 7-5, 3-6, 4-6, 6-4, 7-6 (7).
Women's Singles - Fourth Round
Marta Kostyuk (12), Ukraine, def. **Ashlyn Krueger, United States**, 6-4, 6-4.
Elise Mertens (25), Belgium, def. Marie Bouzkova (21), Czechia, 6-4, 6-4.
Jasmine Paolini (13), Italy, def. Alexandra Eala (29), Philippines, 6-4, 4-6, 6-3.
Linda Noskova (9), Czechia, def. **Madison Keys (26), United States**, 6-4, 7-6 (2).

FIFA World Cup

ROUND OF 16
Saturday, July 4
Morocco 3, Canada 0
France 1, Paraguay 0
Sunday, July 5
Norway 2, Brazil 1
England 3, Mexico 2
Monday
Spain 1, Portugal 0
Belgium 4**, United States** 1
Tuesday
Argentina vs. Egypt, 12pm
Switzerland vs. Colombia, 4pm

NWSL

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
San Diego	9	4	1	28	21	13
Portland	8	3	3	27	24	14
Washington	7	2	3	24	20	10
Utah Royals FC	7	3	3	24	20	13
Kansas City	8	5	0	24	21	17
North Carolina	6	3	3	21	20	14
Gotham FC	**6**	**3**	**3**	**21**	**12**	**7**
Orlando	5	6	2	17	18	19
Angel City	5	6	1	16	18	14
Denver Summit FC	4	5	3	15	17	16
Seattle	4	6	2	14	11	16
Houston	4	7	2	14	15	21
Bay FC	3	6	3	12	11	19
Chicago	4	9	0	12	8	26
Boston Legacy FC	2	7	4	10	13	21
Louisville	2	9	1	7	15	24

NOTE: Three points for victory, one point for tie.
Friday
Chicago at Boston Legacy FC, 8pm
Bay FC at Louisville, 8pm
Kansas City at Orlando, 8pm
Gotham FC at Utah Royals FC, 10pm
Saturday
Washington at North Carolina, 6:30pm
Angel City at San Diego, 8:45pm
Sunday
Portland at Seattle, 4pm
Houston at Denver Summit FC, 7pm
Wednesday, July 15
Boston Legacy FC at Orlando, 7pm
Washington at Gotham FC, 8pm
Friday, July 17
San Diego at Kansas City, 8pm

LPGA Tour Statistics

Through Sunday
Scoring
1, Nelly Korda, 68.51. 2, Haeran Ryu, 69.71. 3, Hyo Joo Kim, 69.81. 4, Hannah Green, 70.22. 5, Miyu Yamashita, 70.29. 6, Jeeno Thitikul, 70.33. 7, Ina Yoon, 70.36. 8, Ruoning Yin, 70.49. 9, Lydia Ko, 70.51. 10, Sei Young Kim, 70.55.
Driving Distance
1, Julia Lopez Ramirez, 290.89. 2, Riley Smyth, 288.74. 3, Polly Mack, 283.48. 4, Auston Kim, 280.82. 5, Helen Briam, 280.63. 6, Laney Frye, 277.63. 7, Suvichaya Vinijchaitham, 277.59. 8, Ina Yoon, 277.54. 9, Nelly Korda, 277.19. 10, Nanna Koerstz Madsen, 277.16.
Greens in Regulation
1, Haeran Ryu, .80%. 2, Helen Briem, .75%. 3 (tie), Isabello Fierro, Nelly Korda, Jeeno Thitikul and Lottie Woad, .74%. 7 (tie), Hannah Green and Dongeun Lee, .73%. 9, 2 tied with .72%.
Putts per GIR
1 (tie), Hyo Joo Kim and Stephanie Meadow, 1.69. 3, Minjee Lee, 1.72. 4 (tie), Mi Hyang Lee, Chiara Tamburlini and Angel Yin, 1.73. 7 (tie), Nelly Korda, Minjee Lee and Gaby Lopez, 1.74. 10, Brooke Matthews, 1.75.
Birdies
1, Aki Iwai, 197. 2, Lottie Woad, 186. 3, Miyu Yamashita, 185. 4 (tie), Minami Katsu, Jennifer Kupcho and Haeran Ryu, 177. 7, 4 tied with 175.

WNBA

East	W	L	Pct.	GB
Liberty	13	8	.619	—
Indiana	12	8	.600	½
Atlanta	12	9	.571	1
Washington	10	10	.500	2½
Toronto	9	11	.450	3½
Chicago	6	14	.300	6½
Connecticut	5	16	.238	8

West	W	L	Pct.	GB
Minnesota	15	6	.714	—
Las Vegas	15	6	.714	—
Golden State	15	7	.682	½
Dallas	13	8	.619	2
Portland	9	12	.429	6
Los Angeles	8	11	.421	6
Phoenix	8	13	.381	7
Seattle	6	17	.261	10

Monday
Golden State 62, Washington 49
Connecticut 90, Minnesota 89
Seattle 82, Los Angeles 64
Tuesday
Dallas at **Liberty**, 8pm
Chicago at Phoenix, 10pm
Wednesday
Golden State at Toronto, 7pm
Minnesota at Connecticut, 7:30pm
Indiana at Los Angeles, 10pm

NBA Summer League Schedule

Monday
Nets 100**,** Golden State Warriors Blue 79
L.A. Lakers 88, San Antonio 84
Atlanta 82, Oklahoma City 77
Utah 109, Memphis 100
Miami 95, Golden State Warriors Gold 85
Sacramento 95, Milwaukee 89
Tuesday
Atlanta vs. Memphis, 7pm
Oklahoma City vs. Utah, 9pm
Thursday
Minnesota vs. New Orleans, 3:30pm
San Antonio vs. Atlanta, 4:30pm
Detroit vs. Philadelphia, 5:30pm
Golden State vs. Dallas, 7pm
Charlotte vs. Orlando, 7:30pm
Utah vs. Washington, 9pm
Sacramento vs. L.A. Clippers, 11pm
Friday
Nets vs. **Knicks**, 6pm
Milwaukee vs. Miami, 4pm
Cleveland vs. Indiana, 4:30pm
Houston vs. Denver, 6:30pm
Chicago vs. Memphis, 8pm
Boston vs. Toronto, 9pm
Oklahoma City vs. L.A. Lakers, 10pm
Portland vs. Phoenix, 11pm

NASCAR

NASCAR O'Reilly Pole Winners
Through Sunday
1. Justin Allgaier, 2.
1. Sam Mayer, 2.
1. Connor Zilisch, 2.
4. Ross Chastain, 1.
4. Brent Crews, 1.
4. Corey Day, 1.
4. Taylor Gray, 1.
4. Brandon Jones, 1.
4. Kyle Larson, 1.
4. Jesse Love, 1.
4. William Sawalich, 1.
4. Shane Van Gisbergen, 1.

AL Standings

East	W	L	Pct.	GB	*WGB	L10	Streak	Home	Away
Tampa Bay	52	36	.591	—	—	7-3	L-3	31-13	21-23
Yankees	50	40	.556	3	+5	2-8	W-1	23-20	27-20
Baltimore	42	49	.462	11½	3½	4-6	L-1	24-23	18-26
Toronto	42	49	.462	11½	3½	3-7	L-3	24-25	18-24
Boston	40	48	.455	12	4	8-2	W-3	17-27	23-21

Central	W	L	Pct.	GB	*WGB	L10	Streak	Home	Away
Chicago	47	42	.528	—	—	6-4	W-2	28-14	19-28
Cleveland	47	44	.516	1	+1½	5-5	L-2	24-22	23-22
Minnesota	44	47	.484	4	1½	6-4	W-2	22-23	22-24
Detroit	40	50	.444	7½	5	6-4	W-2	23-21	17-29
Kansas City	37	54	.407	11	8½	3-7	W-2	21-26	16-28

West	W	L	Pct.	GB	*WGB	L10	Streak	Home	Away
Seattle	47	44	.516	—	—	6-4	W-2	27-20	20-24
Texas	45	45	.500	1½	—	7-3	L-2	20-20	25-25
Houston	45	48	.484	3	1½	5-5	L-1	23-24	22-24
Athletics	41	49	.456	5½	4	3-7	L-3	19-28	22-21
Los Angeles	36	55	.396	11	9½	3-7	L-6	21-25	15-30

***WGB:** Games behind third-place team in wild-card race

Monday

Yankees 5, Tampa Bay 1
Kansas City 15, Philadelphia 1
Washington 12, Houston 11
San Francisco 10, Toronto 1

Tuesday

Yankees at Tampa Bay, 6:40
Kansas City at **Mets**, 7:10
Cubs at Baltimore, 6:35
Athletics at Detroit, 6:40
Seattle at Miami, 6:40
Houston at Washington, 6:45
Boston at White Sox, 7:40
Cleveland at Minnesota, 7:40
L.A. Angels at Texas, 8:05
Toronto at San Francisco, 9:45

Wednesday

Yankees at Tampa Bay, 6:40
Kansas City at **Mets**, 7:10
Toronto at San Francisco, 3:45
Cubs at Baltimore, 6:35
Athletics at Detroit, 6:40
Seattle at Miami, 6:40
Houston at Washington, 6:45
Boston at White Sox, 7:40
Cleveland at Minnesota, 7:40
L.A. Angels at Texas, 8:05

NL Standings

East	W	L	Pct.	GB	*WGB	L10	Streak	Home	Away
Atlanta	52	37	.584	—	—	4-6	L-2	27-18	25-19
Philadelphia	50	41	.549	3	+1	5-5	L-2	25-21	25-20
Miami	49	42	.538	4	—	7-3	W-3	28-17	21-25
Washington	47	45	.511	6½	2½	6-4	W-1	19-27	28-18
Mets	38	53	.418	15	11	4-6	W-2	19-24	19-29

Central	W	L	Pct.	GB	*WGB	L10	Streak	Home	Away
Milwaukee	56	33	.629	—	—	6-4	W-2	29-18	27-15
Chicago	50	40	.556	6½	+1½	7-3	W-1	27-19	23-21
St. Louis	47	41	.534	8½	½	5-5	L-2	23-22	24-19
Pittsburgh	46	45	.505	11	3	5-5	W-2	23-22	23-23
Cincinnati	41	48	.461	15	7	4-6	W-1	20-24	21-24

West	W	L	Pct.	GB	*WGB	L10	Streak	Home	Away
Los Angeles	59	32	.648	—	—	7-3	L-1	29-15	30-17
Arizona	45	45	.500	13½	3½	4-6	W-1	27-20	18-25
San Diego	44	46	.489	14½	4½	1-9	L-1	23-22	21-24
San Francisco	38	52	.422	20½	10½	5-5	W-1	19-22	19-30
Colorado	37	54	.407	22	12	5-5	W-1	22-25	15-29

***WGB:** Games behind third-place team in wild-card race

Monday

Mets 7, Atlanta 6, 10 inn.
Kansas City 15, Philadelphia 1
Washington 12, Houston 11
Colorado at L.A. Dodgers, (n)
Milwaukee 4, St. Louis 3
San Francisco 10, Toronto 1
Arizona 8, San Diego 0

Tuesday

Kansas City at **Mets**, 7:10
Milwaukee at St. Louis, 2:15, 1st gm.
Cubs at Baltimore, 6:35
Atlanta at Pittsburgh, 6:40
Seattle at Miami, 6:40
Houston at Washington, 6:45
Philadelphia at Cincinnati, 7:10
Milwaukee at St. Louis, 7:45, 2nd gm.
Arizona at San Diego, 9:40
Toronto at San Francisco, 9:45
Colorado at L.A. Dodgers, 10:10

Wednesday

Kansas City at **Mets**, 7:10
Toronto at San Francisco, 3:45
Cubs at Baltimore, 6:35
Atlanta at Pittsburgh, 6:40
Seattle at Miami, 6:40
Houston at Washington, 6:45
Philadelphia at Cincinnati, 7:10
Milwaukee at St. Louis, 7:45
Arizona at San Diego, 10:10
Colorado at L.A. Dodgers, 10:10

POST SU DOKU

Puzzles on Page 28

6	8	7	1	9	4	5	2	3
1	3	9	6	2	5	7	8	4
2	5	4	3	7	8	9	6	1
9	1	8	5	3	6	2	4	7
5	7	3	2	4	9	8	1	6
4	6	2	8	1	7	3	9	5
7	4	1	9	5	2	6	3	8
8	2	5	4	6	3	1	7	9
3	9	6	7	8	1	4	5	2

Solution to Very Easy #7,332

6	5	4	9	8	3	1	7	2
1	3	9	2	6	7	5	4	8
7	8	2	5	1	4	9	3	6
9	7	1	4	5	2	6	8	3
3	4	6	8	9	1	2	5	7
8	2	5	3	7	6	4	1	9
4	1	7	6	2	8	3	9	5
5	6	3	7	4	9	8	2	1
2	9	8	1	3	5	7	6	4

Solution to Difficult #7,122

Yankees 5, Rays 1

Yankees	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Grisham cf	4	0	0	0	0	1	.232
Rice dh	4	1	1	1	0	2	.267
Goldschmidt 1b	4	0	0	0	0	3	.266
Bellinger lf	4	0	0	0	0	3	.248
Domínguez rf	3	1	0	0	1	2	.209
Chisholm 2b	2	1	0	0	1	2	.223
Caballero ss	3	2	2	4	0	0	.249
McMahon 3b	3	0	0	0	0	3	.206
Wells c	3	0	0	0	0	1	.151
Totals	**30**	**5**	**3**	**5**	**2**	**17**	

Tampa Bay	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Díaz dh	4	0	0	0	0	1	.317
Aranda 1b	4	0	0	0	0	3	.283
Caminero 3b	4	0	0	0	0	1	.284
Mullins cf	4	0	0	0	0	2	.210
DeLuca rf	3	0	1	0	0	0	.271
Simpson lf	3	1	1	0	0	0	.278
Fortes c	3	0	0	0	0	0	.255
Palacios 2b	3	0	2	1	0	0	.238
Walls ss	3	0	0	0	0	2	.226
Totals	**31**	**1**	**4**	**1**	**0**	**9**	

Yankees	**000 030 011 —**	**5**	**3**	**0**
Tampa Bay	**000 010 000 —**	**1**	**4**	**0**

LOB: New York 0, Tampa Bay 3. **HR:** Caballero (9), off Jax; Caballero (10), off Roycroft; Rice (25), off Roycroft. **RBIs:** Caballero 4 (33), Rice (57), Palacios (25). **Runners left in scoring position:** New York 0; Tampa Bay 0. **RISP:** New York 1 for 1; Tampa Bay 1 for 1. **Runners moved up:** Fortes.

Yankees	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Schlittler, W, 9-5	8.0	4	1	1	0	8	101	2.01
Bednar	1.0	0	0	0	0	1	11	2.92

Tampa Bay	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Jax, L, 4-6	5.0	1	3	3	2	10	81	3.60
Sulser	1.0	0	0	0	0	1	14	5.73
Legumina	1.0	0	0	0	0	2	14	3.47
Roycroft	2.0	2	2	2	0	4	37	13.50

T: 2:21. **A:** 18,129 (25,025).

Royals 15, Phillies 1

Philadelphia	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Turner ss	4	1	3	0	0	0	.242
Marchán c	1	0	0	0	0	0	.111
Schwarber dh	3	0	0	0	1	3	.252
c-Crawford ph-cf	1	0	0	0	0	1	.254
Harper 1b	1	0	0	0	3	1	.270
Stubbs 1b-p	1	0	1	0	0	0	.179
Bohm 3b	5	0	1	1	0	1	.224
Marsh rf-lf	4	0	0	0	1	2	.305
Sosa lf-ss	4	0	0	0	1	0	.216
Stott 2b	4	0	2	0	1	1	.251
Realmuto c	3	0	1	0	0	2	.204
Rincones rf	1	0	1	0	0	0	.212
Hill cf-1b	4	0	1	0	0	2	.239
Totals	**36**	**1**	**10**	**1**	**7**	**13**	

Kansas City	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Thomas cf	3	1	2	1	1	1	.222
Misner ph-cf	1	1	0	0	1	0	.220
Witt dh	4	2	2	0	0	0	.292
Massey ph-dh	1	1	1	1	1	0	.257
Perez 1b	4	1	3	1	0	0	.209
Collins pr-lf	1	0	1	0	0	0	.238
Caglianone rf-1b	6	1	2	2	0	2	.259
Loftin 2b	5	2	3	2	1	0	.236
Marte lf-rf	5	1	2	2	0	1	.269
Tolbert ss	5	3	5	2	0	0	.333
Maile c	4	2	1	3	1	0	.250
Rojas 3b	5	0	0	0	0	1	.160
Totals	**44**	**15**	**22**	**14**	**5**	**5**	

Philadelphia	**100 000 000 —**	**1**	**10**	**1**
Kansas City	**611 111 22x —**	**15**	**22**	**0**

E: Turner (12). **LOB:** Philadelphia 15, Kansas City 11. **2B:** Turner (16), Bohm (14), Tolbert (1), Perez (12). **HR:** Maile (1), off Sánchez; Perez (11), off Sánchez; Thomas (6), off Sánchez; Tolbert (1), off Banks. **RBIs:** Bohm (47), Loftin 2 (27), Marte 2 (9), Maile 3 (3), Perez (33), Tolbert 2 (3), Thomas (25), Caglianone 2 (33), Massey (29). **CS:** Tolbert (3). **RISP:** Philadelphia 1 for 9; Kansas City 11 for 20. **DP:** Philadelphia 1 (Hill, Turner, Hill); Kansas City 1 (Rojas, Loftin, Perez).

Philadelphia	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Sánchez, L, 10-4	3.1	12	9	9	1	1	83	2.62
Johnson	0.2	0	0	0	1	1	15	7.15
Banks	1.0	1	1	1	0	1	16	5.97
Backhus	1.0	4	1	1	0	1	20	5.87
Trivino	1.0	1	2	2	2	1	29	15.00
Stubbs	1.0	4	2	2	1	0	19	18.00

Kansas City	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Camrn, W, 5-6	5.0	6	1	1	5	7	105	4.77
Cruz	1.0	1	0	0	1	2	18	5.08
Way	1.0	2	0	0	1	1	21	3.18
Cuas	2.0	1	0	0	0	3	36	3.60

T: 3:09. **A:** 13,496 (38,427).

Mets 7, Braves 6, 10 inn.

Mets	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Ewing cf	4	0	0	0	1	3	.259
Soto lf	2	1	1	3	3	0	.301
Bichette 3b	5	1	2	0	0	1	.260
Lindor dh	5	0	0	0	0	1	.216
Benge rf	4	2	2	1	1	0	.258
J.Young 1b	4	1	1	0	0	1	.224
Alvarez c	4	0	2	1	0	0	.251
Taylor pr	0	1	0	0	0	0	.207
Torrens c	1	0	1	2	0	0	.219
Baty 2b	5	0	1	0	0	3	.217
Mauricio ss	4	1	1	0	0	0	.180
Totals	**38**	**7**	**11**	**7**	**5**	**9**	

Atlanta	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Harris cf	6	0	3	2	0	3	.306
Albies 2b	6	1	2	0	0	2	.272
Olson 1b	5	2	2	3	1	1	.273
Baldwin c	4	0	2	0	0	0	.255
Mateo pr-lf	0	0	0	0	1	0	.248
Dubón lf-3b	6	0	1	0	0	1	.270
Smith dh	2	1	1	0	0	1	.273
Bart ph-dh-c	2	0	0	0	1	1	.228
Riley 3b	4	0	0	0	1	2	.208
Murphy p	0	0	0	0	0	0	---
Yastrzemski rf	4	1	1	0	0	0	.226
Azócar ph-rf	1	1	0	0	0	1	.313
Jarvis ss	4	0	1	1	1	1	.200
Totals	**44**	**6**	**13**	**6**	**5**	**13**	

Mets	**010 001 003**	**2 —**	**7**	**11**	**1**
Atlanta	**021 000 002**	**1 —**	**6**	**13**	**0**

E: J.Young (2). **LOB:** New York 8, Atlanta 15. **2B:** Benge (12), Torrens (10), Albies 2 (19), Dubón (18), Harris (14). **HR:** Benge (11), off López; Soto (19), off Iglesias; Olson (23), off Peralta; Olson (24), off Williams. **RBIs:** Benge (35), Alvarez (20), Soto 3 (46), Torrens 2 (18), Jarvis (1), Harris 2 (53), Olson 3 (57). **SB:** Soto (7), Riley (5). **Runners left in scoring position:** New York 5 (Soto, Baty 2, Lindor 2); Atlanta 11 (Dubón 2, Azócar 2, Albies, Harris, Bart 4, Baldwin). **RISP:** New York 4 for 13; Atlanta 4 for 18.

Mets	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Peralta	4.2	6	3	1	1	6	103	4.68
Pérez	1.1	1	0	0	0	3	16	5.50
Minter	1.0	2	0	0	0	1	16	0.56
Zuñiga	1.0	0	0	0	1	1	18	0.00
Williams, BS, 13-15	0.2	3	2	2	1	0	30	4.85
Raley, W, 3-3	0.1	0	0	0	0	1	3	2.23
Weaver, S, 1-3	1.0	1	1	0	2	1	19	1.89

Atlanta	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
López	5.0	3	1	1	2	5	80	3.18
Fuentes, H, 9	1.0	4	1	1	0	1	23	2.60
Lee, H, 18	1.0	0	0	0	2	0	19	1.56
Kinley, H, 10	1.0	0	0	0	1	1	16	3.62
Iglesias, BS, 17-18	1.0	3	3	3	0	1	25	2.37
Murphy, L, 0-1	1.0	1	2	1	0	1	20	9.00

T: 3:42. **A:** 31,445 (41,149).

Nationals 12, Astros 11

Houston	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Altuve 2b	5	1	1	3	0	1	.235
Y.Alvarez dh	5	0	1	0	0	2	.318
Paredes 3b	4	1	0	0	1	1	.251
Walker 1b	5	0	2	1	0	0	.240
Wade lf	3	1	0	0	1	1	.190
Smith rf	3	2	2	0	1	0	.225
Diaz c	4	2	2	2	0	0	.242
Shewmake ss	4	2	2	1	0	0	.256
Matthews cf	4	2	2	3	0	1	.197
Totals	**37**	**11**	**12**	**10**	**3**	**6**	

Washington	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Wood dh	2	3	1	4	3	0	.268
García 1b	5	1	1	1	0	3	.281
Mead 3b	5	2	3	3	0	1	.240
Abrams ss	5	2	3	3	0	1	.274
Crews rf	4	1	0	0	0	1	.226
Lile lf	4	0	0	0	0	0	.253
Young cf	4	1	1	0	0	0	.225
Millas c	3	0	1	1	0	2	.188
Nuñez 2b	4	2	3	0	0	1	.243
Totals	**36**	**12**	**13**	**12**	**3**	**9**	

Houston	**132 001 040 —**	**11**	**12**	**2**
Washington	**105 060 00x —**	**12**	**13**	**0**

E: Burrows (1), Shewmake (2). **LOB:** Houston 2, Washington 4. **2B:** Walker (17), Shewmake (4), Mead (12), García (16). **HR:** Altuve (9), off Mikolas; Diaz (5), off Mikolas; Matthews (7), off Henry; Abrams (19), off Burrows; Mead (15), off Burrows; Wood (24), off Blubaugh. **RBIs:** Walker (58), Altuve 3 (25), Diaz 2 (21), Shewmake (9), Matthews 3 (21), Mead 3 (42), García (65), Abrams 3 (64), Millas (11), Wood 4 (60). **SB:** Nuñez (33), Abrams (15), Wood (14). **CS:** Millas (1), Wood (2). **SF:** Millas. **RISP:** Houston 3 for 6; Washington 6 for 13. **DP:** Washington 2 (García; Nuñez, Abrams, García).

Houston	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Burrows, L, 4-9	4.1	9	10	7	2	3	83	5.99
Blubaugh	1.2	3	2	2	0	3	33	3.57
Pearson	1.0	1	0	0	0	1	13	3.79
De Los Santos	1.0	0	0	0	1	2	19	4.65

Washington	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Mikolas, W, 3-7	6.0	9	7	7	2	3	99	5.78
Henry	1.2	3	4	4	1	2	44	7.90
Beeter, S, 7-11	1.1	0	0	0	0	1	12	3.00

T: 2:46. **A:** 11,092 (41,376).

Brewers 4, Cardinals 3

Milwaukee	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Yelich dh	4	1	0	0	1	2	.239
Chourio lf	4	0	0	0	1	1	.292
Turang 2b	4	0	1	2	0	0	.268
Contreras c	4	0	0	0	0	1	.291
Bauers 1b	4	0	1	0	0	1	.265
Mitchell cf	3	1	2	0	1	1	.269
Frelick rf	4	1	1	0	0	2	.242
Pratt ss	4	0	1	0	0	0	.204
Hamilton 3b	3	0	2	2	0	1	.240
Ortiz pr-3b	1	1	0	0	0	0	.209
Totals	**35**	**4**	**8**	**4**	**3**	**9**	

St. Louis	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Wetherholt 2b	4	1	0	0	0	1	.266
Herrera dh	4	0	0	0	0	1	.252
Walker rf	2	0	0	0	2	1	.290
Velázquez lf	3	1	1	1	0	0	.277
Nootbaar lf	1	0	0	0	0	0	.270
Fermín 3b	3	0	2	1	0	0	.273
Winn ss	4	0	2	1	0	1	.253
Church cf	4	0	1	0	0	0	.255
Jordan 1b	3	0	0	0	0	0	.234
Burleson ph	1	0	0	0	0	1	.281
Pagés c	3	1	1	0	0	0	.218
Torres ph	1	0	0	0	0	1	.231
Totals	**33**	**3**	**7**	**3**	**2**	**6**	

Milwaukee	**000 000 400 —**	**4**	**8**	**1**
St. Louis	**002 001 000 —**	**3**	**7**	**2**

E: Turang (3), Church (2), Fernandez (3). **LOB:** Milwaukee 7, St. Louis 6. **2B:** Frelick (14), Hamilton (6), Fermín (9), Velázquez (3). **RBIs:** Hamilton 2 (15), Turang 2 (53), Velázquez (10), Fermín (17), Winn (38). **CS:** Church (3). **S:** Fermín. **Runners left in scoring position:** Milwaukee 3 (Yelich, Pratt 2); St. Louis 2 (Winn, Jordan). **RISP:** Milwaukee 2 for 8; St. Louis 2 for 8. **Runners moved up:** Church. **GIDP:** Contreras. **DP:** St. Louis 1 (Fermín, Wetherholt, Jordan).

Milwaukee	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Drohan, W, 4-2	6.0	6	3	1	2	2	85	2.97
Patrick, H, 3	2.0	0	0	0	0	2	20	3.44
Megill, S, 14-16	1.0	1	0	0	0	2	15	3.00

St. Louis	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
May	4.2	4	0	0	0	7	81	4.55
Bruihl	1.1	1	1	1	1	0	23	3.70
Fernandz, L, 1-2	0.0	2	3	2	0	0	17	2.70
Stanek, BS, 1-4	1.0	1	0	0	1	0	11	4.67
Graceffo	2.0	0	0	0	1	2	25	3.19

T: 2:45. **A:** 21,786 (44,494).

Giants 10, Blue Jays 1

Toronto	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Clement 2b	4	0	1	0	0	0	.293
Lukes rf	4	0	1	0	0	0	.284
Guerrero 1b	3	0	0	0	1	1	.263
Okamoto 3b	4	1	1	1	0	1	.235
Keys dh	4	0	0	0	0	3	.160
Kirk c	3	0	0	0	1	0	.182
Varsho cf	3	0	0	0	0	1	.246
Straw lf	3	0	0	0	0	0	.232
Giménez ss	3	0	0	0	0	1	.234
Totals	**31**	**1**	**3**	**1**	**2**	**7**	

San Francisco	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Ramos rf	5	3	3	5	0	1	.274
Arraez 2b	4	0	1	0	1	0	.325
Schmitt 3b	4	0	0	0	0	3	.279
Devers dh	2	2	0	0	2	0	.246
Lee cf	3	1	1	0	1	0	.315
Adames ss	2	1	0	0	2	0	.231
Eldridge 1b	4	1	1	0	0	3	.274
Bericoto lf	4	2	2	2	0	0	.314
Haase c	3	0	0	0	0	1	.167
Totals	**31**	**10**	**8**	**7**	**6**	**8**	

Toronto	**000 001 000 —**	**1**	**3**	**3**
San Francisco	**100 115 02x —**	**10**	**8**	**1**

E: Giménez (4), Okamoto 2 (10), Schmitt (4). **LOB:** Toronto 5, San Francisco 4. **3B:** Ramos (3). **HR:** Okamoto (20), off Roupp; Ramos (7), off Nance; Ramos (8), off Macko. **RBIs:** Okamoto (55), Bericoto 2 (8), Ramos 5 (28). **SB:** Arraez (7), Bericoto (1). **S:** Haase. **Runners left in scoring position:** Toronto 1 (Okamoto); San Francisco 1 (Schmitt). **RISP:** Toronto 0 for 1; San Francisco 3 for 9. **Runners moved up:** Lukes, Adames, Ramos, Bericoto, Haase. **GIDP:** Adames. **DP:** Toronto 1 (Giménez, Clement, Guerrero).

Toronto	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Gausman, L, 4-8	5.1	5	7	4	5	8	92	4.32
Nance	1.2	1	1	1	1	0	18	3.82
Macko	1.0	2	2	2	0	0	12	3.63

San Francisco	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Roupp, W, 6-8	8.0	3	1	1	2	5	104	4.27
Bivens	1.0	0	0	0	0	2	14	0.00

T: 2:09. **A:** 32,740 (41,915).

Diamondbacks 8, Padres 0

Arizona	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Marte 2b	4	1	1	0	0	2	.267
Barrosa ph-rf	1	0	0	0	0	1	.182
Perdomo ss	4	2	2	1	0	0	.246
Carroll rf	4	1	1	0	0	1	.265
Smith ph-1b	1	0	0	0	0	1	.155
Moreno c	4	1	2	0	1	0	.286
Gurriel dh	4	1	1	1	0	1	.217
Kepler lf	4	1	2	4	0	1	.174
Arenado 3b	4	1	1	1	0	1	.240
Vargas 1b-2b	4	0	0	0	0	0	.257
Troy cf	4	0	1	0	0	1	.221
Totals	**38**	**8**	**11**	**7**	**1**	**9**	

San Diego	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg
Tatis rf	3	0	0	0	0	1	.282
Bowen rf	1	0	0	0	0	0	.114
Cronenworth 2b	4	0	2	0	0	1	.179
Machado 3b	4	0	1	0	0	1	.190
Sheets 1b	4	0	1	0	0	1	.236
France dh	3	0	1	0	0	1	.254
Campusano ph	1	0	0	0	0	0	.281
Merrill cf	4	0	2	0	0	1	.217
Taylor lf	4	0	1	0	0	2	.326
Song ss	4	0	0	0	0	0	.225
Durán c	3	0	0	0	0	3	.132
Totals	**35**	**0**	**8**	**0**	**0**	**11**	

Arizona	**204 101 000 —**	**8**	**11**	**0**
San Diego	**000 000 000 —**	**0**	**8**	**2**

E: Buehler (1), Taylor (1). **LOB:** Arizona 5, San Diego 8. **2B:** Carroll (19). **3B:** Marte (3). **HR:** Kepler (1), off Buehler; Perdomo (6), off Buehler; Arenado (10), off Jacob. **RBIs:** Kepler 4 (4), Gurriel (20), Perdomo (32), Arenado (37). **SB:** Perdomo (14). **Runners left in scoring position:** Arizona 3 (Moreno, Arenado 2); San Diego 1 (Durán). **RISP:** Arizona 4 for 9; San Diego 0 for 1. **Runners moved up:** Song.

Arizona	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Pfaadt, W, 2-1	5.0	4	0	0	0	6	72	4.84
Thompson	2.0	2	0	0	0	4	28	3.06
Jameson	2.0	2	0	0	0	1	27	3.77

San Diego	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Buehler, L, 5-5	5.0	7	7	7	1	4	93	5.07
Jacob	3.0	2	1	1	0	3	42	5.40
Marinaccio	1.0	2	0	0	0	2	23	4.81

T: 2:25. **A:** 38,204 (40,222).

NASCAR

NASCAR Cup Series Schedule-Winners
March 29 — Cook Out 400 (Chase Elliott)
April 12 — Food City 500 (Ty Gibbs)
April 19 — AdventHealth 400 (Tyler Reddick)
April 26 — Jack Link's 500 (Carson Hocevar)
May 3 — Würth 400 presented by LIQUI MOLY (Chase Elliott)
May 10 — Go Bowling at The Glen (Shane Van Gisbergen)
May 17 — NASCAR All-Star Race (Denny Hamlin)
May 24 — Coca-Cola 600 (Daniel Suárez)
May 31 — Cracker Barrel 400 (Denny Hamlin)
June 7 — FireKeepers Casino 400 (Denny Hamlin)
June 14 — Great American Getaway 400 presented by VISITPA (Denny Hamlin)
June 21 — Anduril 250 (Corey Heim)
June 28 — Toyota / Save Mart 350 (Shane Van Gisbergen)
July 5 — eero 400 (Chase Briscoe)
July 12 — Quaker State 400 Available at Walmart, Hampton, Ga.
July 19 — Window World 450, North Wilkesboro, N.C.
July 26 — Brickyard 400, Speedway, Ind.
Aug. 9 — Iowa Corn 350 Powered by Ethanol, Newton, Iowa
Aug. 15 — Cook Out 400, Richmond, Va.
Aug. 23 — Dollar Tree 301, Loudon, N.H.
Aug. 29 — Coke Zero Sugar 400, Daytona Beach, Fla.
Sept. 6 — Cook Out Southern 500, Darlington, S.C.
Sept. 13 — Enjoy Illinois 300, Madison, Ill.
Sept. 19 — Bass Pro Shops Night Race, Bristol, Tenn.
Sept. 27 — Hollywood Casino 400, Kansas City, Kan.
Oct. 4 — South Point 400, Las Vegas
Oct. 11 — Bank of America 400, Concord, N.C.
Oct. 18 — Freeway Insurance 500, Avondale, Ariz.
Oct. 25 — Yellawood 500, Talladega, Ala.
Nov. 1 — Xfinity 500, Ridgeway, Va.
Nov. 8 — NASCAR Cup Series Championship Race, Homestead, Fla.

NEW YORK POST ACTION

The POST Line

MLB
Tuesday
American League

Favorite	Money Line	Underdog
RAYS	-101-120	**Yankees**
TIGERS	$159-194	Athletics
Red Sox	$104-126	WHITE SOX
TWINS	$102-122	Guardians
RANGERS	$139-168	Angels

National League

Favorite	Money Line	Underdog
Brewers 1st Gm.	$150-182	CARDINALS
PIRATES	$149-181	Braves
Phillies	$141-171	REDS
CARDINALS 2nd Gm.	OFF	Brewers
PADRES	$109-131	D'Backs
DODGERS	$214-267	Rockies

Interleague

Favorite	Money Line	Underdog
METS	$129-156	Royals
Cubs	$100-120	ORIOLES
MARLINS	-102-118	Mariners
NATIONALS	$102-122	Astros
GIANTS	OFF	Blue Jays

Home team in CAPS

FIFA World Cup
Tuesday- Round of 16

Favorite	Money Line	Underdog
*Argentina	$275-725	Egypt
**Colombia	$130-240	Switzerland
*Atlanta	**Vancouver	
	Thursday	
*France	$175-475	Morocco
*Foxborough, Ma.		
	Saturday	
*England	$115-280	Norway
*Miami		

WNBA
Tuesday

Favorite	PTS (O/U)	Underdog
LIBERTY	4.5 (175.5)	Wings
MERCURY	3.5 (174.5)	Sky

NFL Preseaon
Thursday- Aug. 6

Favorite	PTS (O/U)	Underdog
Panthers	1.5 (35.5)	CARDINALS

SPORTS SHORTS

NHL: Rangers, Trudeau strike deal

The Rangers and newly acquired defenseman **William Trudeau** agreed to terms on a one-year contract, team president and general manager **Chris Drury** announced Monday.

Trudeau, 23, was the Rangers' return in last month's trade that sent forward **Brett Berard** to the Canadiens.

● The Flames signed defenseman **Simon Nemec**, acquired via trade with the Devils last month, to a five-year contract worth $36.25 million.

WIMBLEDON: Keys sent packing

Madison Keys was ousted at Wimbledon on Monday with a 6-4, 7-6(2) loss to **Linda Noskova**, ending the former Australian Open champion's run in the Round of 16 on Monday in London.

Unseeded fellow American **Ashlyn Krueger** also bowed out, falling 6-4, 6-4 to No. 12 seed **Marta Kostyuk**.

Jasmine Paolini ended the historic Wimbledon run of Filipino star **Alexandra Eala** 6-4, 4-6, 6-3 to reach the quarterfinals.

On the men's side, No. 6 seed **Taylor Fritz** made swift work of 10th-seeded Alexander Bublik 7-6(1) 6-4 6-4 to reach the quarterfinals for the fourth time in five years at the All England Club.

Fellow title contender **Alexander Zverev**'s late-starting clash with **Jiri Lehecka** will resume Tuesday with the French Open winner leading 6-4, 7-5, 3-3 after play was suspended due to curfew.

NBA: DeRozan to be free agent

The Kings waived veteran forward **DeMar DeRozan** on Monday after both sides worked to resolve a partial guarantee in his contract for next season, ESPN reported.

● **Nikola Jokic** reiterated his hope to remain with the Nuggets for the rest of his career but that he plans to hold off on signing his contract extension until next summer, when he can sign a five-year supermax contract that would be worth around $350 million.

MLB: Wood, Nats outslug Astros

James Wood hit a grand slam in the fifth inning and the Nationals overcame a five-run deficit and held off the Astros 12-11 in the opener of a three-game series Monday night in Washington.

● In San Francisco, **Heliot Ramos** homered twice and drove in five runs to back **Landen Roupp**'s first win in more than two months, and the Giants beat the Blue Jays 10-1.

● Former Phillies All-Star closer **Al Holland** died at 73 on Saturday in South Carolina. He also spent time with the Yankees and three other teams during a career spanning from 1977-87.

ETC.: Pogacar snags yellow jersey

Tadej Pogacar made the most of the first mountain stage of the Tour de France to post his 22nd career stage win at cycling's biggest race and seize the race leader's yellow jersey on Monday in Les Angles, France.

TOP PLAY

Now it gets Messi for Egypt

By MIKE TURAY

Lionel Messi and Argentina survived a scare from Cape Verde to start the knockout round, escaping with a 3-2 win in extra time.

Argentina now takes on AFCON representative Egypt, which outdueled Australia in penalties to punch its ticket into the Round of 16.

Mohamed Salah leads Egypt, which is ranked 24th in the latest FIFA rankings. The Pharaohs must play tough for 90 minutes in order to pull off a miracle.

The only issue with Egypt is that its attack often relies heavily on transition play and counters. In four tournament games, it has generated only 5.1 expected goals.

There also isn't a true strategy to contain a red-hot Messi. It's evident that the 39-year-old continues to perform at a high level, as he set another World Cup record by scoring in his seventh straight tournament match vs. Cape Verde.

In a highly competitive Golden Boot race, Messi is tied with Kylian Mbappé and Erling Haaland, each with seven goals.

Expect Messi to strike again, given that Egypt has conceded 5.4 expected goals (xG) in the tournament and has yet to keep a clean sheet.

If Argentina maintains possession and scores early, Egypt will be put in a position to play catch-up, which I think favors the reigning tournament winners.

THE PLAYS: Argentina -1.5 goals (+114, FanDuel); Messi to score (-150, BetMGM).

Pitching Form

		(Game time)	2026			'26 vs OPP		CAREER	LAST 3 STARTS		
			W-L	ERA	*REC	W-L	ERA	vs OPP	W-L	IP	ERA
Yankees	Warren (R)	—	7-3	3.73	12-5	0-0	0.00	0-1	0-2	16.2	4.86
Rays	Seymour (L)	(6:40pm)	5-1	4.02	3-1	0-0	0.00	1-0	1-1	15.0	3.00
Cubs	Boyd (L)	—	3-1	5.08	5-2	0-0	0.00	1-1	2-0	15.2	2.87
Orioles	Baz (R)	(6:35pm)	4-8	4.19	5-12	0-0	0.00	0-1	0-2	19.0	4.74
Mariners	TBD	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Marlins	Meyer (R)	(6:40pm)	9-1	2.53	13-5	0-1	11.25	0-1	2-1	18.0	1.50
Astros	Imai (R)	—	5-4	6.14	7-5	0-0	0.00	0-0	2-1	13.1	5.40
Nationals	Alvarez (L)	(6:45pm)	2-1	3.05	2-3	0-0	0.00	0-0	0-1	12.1	2.92
Royals	Lugo (R)	—	3-6	4.20	7-10	0-0	0.00	0-0	1-2	17.0	5.82
Mets	TBD	(7:10pm)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Blue Jays	TBD	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Giants	McDonald (R)	(9:45pm)	3-6	4.42	5-6	0-0	0.00	0-0	1-2	14.1	3.77
Athletics	Ginn (R)	—	7-4	3.04	11-5	0-0	0.00	0-1	2-1	17.1	3.63
Tigers	Skubal (L)	(6:40pm)	4-4	3.15	6-5	1-1	3.55	1-1	1-1	17.2	4.08
Red Sox	Tolle (L)	—	4-6	3.39	4-9	0-0	0.00	0-0	1-2	16.0	5.06
White Sox	Schultz (L)	(7:40pm)	2-5	5.86	3-6	0-0	0.00	0-0	0-3	13.2	7.90
Guardians	Cantillo (L)	—	7-3	3.86	13-5	0-1	3.46	0-2	2-0	19.0	1.89
Twins	Bradley (R)	(7:40pm)	7-3	3.86	10-6	0-0	0.00	1-1	2-0	17.0	2.65
Angels	Soriano (R)	—	8-5	3.42	10-8	0-0	0.00	2-3	0-1	13.0	7.62
Rangers	deGrom (R)	(8:05pm)	7-5	3.48	10-7	0-1	18.00	1-3	2-1	19.0	4.74
Brewers	Misiorowski (R)	—	9-4	1.47	10-7	1-0	1.29	2-1	1-2	17.0	2.12
Cardinals	TBD 1st Gm.	(2:15pm)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Braves	Waldrep (R)	—	0-0	3.68	0-1	0-0	0.00	0-0	2-0	16.1	3.86
Pirates	Skenes (R)	(6:40pm)	6-8	3.62	6-12	0-0	0.00	0-0	0-2	15.0	7.80
Phillies	TBD	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Reds	Abbott (L)	(7:10pm)	5-4	3.88	10-8	1-0	1.69	1-1	1-0	15.1	3.52
Brewers	TBD	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cardinals	TBD 2nd Gm.	(7:45pm)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
D'backs	Gallen (R)	—	3-8	6.36	6-12	0-0	0.00	5-4	0-3	16.1	11.02
Padres	TBD	(9:40pm)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Rockies	Lorenzen (R)	—	3-9	6.91	7-11	0-0	5.40	1-0	1-1	15.1	5.87
Dodgers	Wrobleski (L)	(10:10pm)	10-2	2.80	11-3	1-0	1.29	2-1	3-0	20.0	2.25

* **REC:** Won-lost record of pitcher's team in games he has started.

STITCHES

Ginn! Take J.T. and the A's

The trade rumors are swirling around Tarik Skubal. The Tigers' ace found his form by one-hitting the Yankees in The Bronx, fanning nine Bombers in six innings. Skubal has given up 11 runs in his last 17 $^2/_3$ innings at home, and the A's are in Detroit. J.T. Ginn has won two in a row and limited the baseball-best Dodgers to one run on three hits. Taking J.T. Ginn & Tonic and the A's for $50.

-$

We were dealt a bad hand every time we bet on the Royals this season. This time, we drew a Royal flush. Kansas City scored early and often. They had more hits (22) than Nine Inch Nails, Steve Miller, Jonas Brothers, Smashing Pumpkins, Kiss, Meatloaf, Styx, Cheap Trick, Midnight Oil, Adam Ant and the Red Hot Chili Peppers combined. Philly's Cristopher Sánchez coughed up nine runs, three homers and two hairballs and the Royals phlogged the Phillies 15-1. Home dog win has us at -39 saberhagens.

stitches@nypost.com

NEW YORK POST ACTION

Home Team Lineups

HOME AWAY

	TODAY July 7	WED July 8	THU July 9	FRI July 10	SAT July 11
	Tampa Bay 6:40 YES/TBS 660 AM 101.9 FM	Tampa Bay 6:40 Prime Video 660 AM 101.9 FM	Tampa Bay 1:10 YES 660 AM 101.9 FM	Washington 6:45 YES 660 AM 101.9 FM	Washington 4:05 YES 660 AM 101.9 FM
	Kansas City 7:10 SNY 880 AM	Kansas City 7:10 SNY 880 AM	Kansas City 1:10 SNY 880 AM	Boston 7:15 Apple TV 880 AM	Boston 4:10 SNY FS1 880 AM
	Dallas 8:00 ESPN	NO GAME	NO GAME	NO GAME	Minnesota 1:00 ABC

Wednesday, July 22		Wednesday, July 22		Friday	
	FIFA World Cup Break until July 22		FIFA World Cup Break until July 22		Utah Royals FC 10:00 Victory+

Today's Sports on the Air

MLB BASEBALL		
6:40 p.m.	Yankees at Rays	YES, TBS, 660 AM, 101.9 FM
7:10 p.m.	Royals at Mets	SNY, 880 AM
10 p.m.	Rockies at Dodgers	MLBN
MEN'S SOCCER: FIFA WORLD CUP		
Noon	Round of 16: Argentina vs. Egypt	Fox, Telemundo
4 p.m.	Round of 16: Switzerland vs. Colombia	Fox, Telemundo
WNBA BASKETBALL		
8 p.m.	Wings at Liberty	ESPN
NBA BASKETBALL		
7 p.m.	Summer League: Hawks vs. Grizzlies	Prime Video, ESPNU
9 p.m.	Summer League: Thunder vs. Jazz	Prime Video, ESPNU
TENNIS		
8 a.m.	ATP/WTA: Wimbledon, Quarterfinals	ESPN, ESPN2
SOFTBALL		
8 p.m.	Athletes Unlimited: Blaze at Cascade	ESPN2

NCAAF

Ryan Day

Getty Images

FBS Championship Winner 2026-27

TEAM	ODDS	TEAM	ODDS
Ohio State	+550	Washington	100/1
Notre Dame	+650	Penn State	100/1
Texas	+750	Louisville	125/1
Oregon	+800	SMU	125/1
Georgia	+850	South Carolina	125/1
Indiana	+850	Utah	150/1
Miami (Fla.)	12/1	Iowa	175/1
LSU	20/1	Clemson	200/1
Texas A&M	20/1	Vanderbilt	250/1
Texas Tech	22/1	Georgia Tech	250/1
Ole Miss	22/1	Pittsburgh	250/1
Alabama	22/1	Virginia	300/1
Oklahoma	27/1	Kansas State	300/1
USC	35/1	Virginia Tech	350/1
Michigan	40/1	TCU	350/1
Tennessee	50/1	Houston	400/1
Florida	50/1	Arizona State	400/1
Missouri	80/1	Kentucky	500/1
Auburn	100/1	Florida State	600/1
BYU	100/1	UCLA	700/1

ODDS & ENDS

WORLD CUP

Tuesday

Argentina vs. Egypt

3-WAY BETTING (90 minutes plus stoppage time)	ODDS
Argentina	-275
Draw	+375
Egypt	+675

TOTAL GOALS (including extra time)	ODDS
Over 2.5	-130
Under 2.5	+106

BOTH TEAMS SCORE (including extra time)	ODDS
Yes	+132
No	-168

ANYTIME GOAL SCORER (including extra time)	ODDS
Lionel Messi (ARG)	-150
Lautaro Martínez (ARG)	+110
Julián Alvarez (ARG)	+110
Thiago Almada (ARG)	+290
Enzo Fernández (ARG)	+320
Mohamed Salah (EGY)	+420
Alexis Mac Allister (ARG)	+460
Omar Marmoush (EGY)	+500

LIONEL MESSI PROPS (including extra time)	ODDS
First goal scorer	+200
Two or more goals	+340
Three goals or more	17/1
Anytime assist	+105
Goal or assist in extra time	-310
2 or more shots on target	-220
3 or more shots on target	+140

Switzerland vs. Colombia

3-WAY BETTING (90 minutes plus stoppage time)	ODDS
Switzerland	+225
Draw	+200
Colombia	+130

TOTAL GOALS (including extra time)	ODDS
Over 2.5	-114
Under 2.5	-106

BOTH TEAMS SCORE (including extra time)	ODDS
Yes	-122
No	-104

ANYTIME GOAL SCORER (including extra time)	ODDS
Luis Díaz (COL)	+200
Breel Embolo (SUI)	+210
Luis Suárez (COL)	+210
James Rodríguez (COL)	+310
Jhon Arias (COL)	+390
Dan Ndoye (SUI)	+410
Johan Manzambi (SUI)	+420
Rubén Vargas (SUI)	+470

TWO OR MORE GOALS (including extra time)	ODDS
Breel Embolo (SUI)	16/1
Luis Díaz (COL)	17/1
Luis Suárez (COL)	17/1
James Rodríguez (COL)	30/1
Jhon Arias (COL)	40/1
Dan Ndoye (SUI)	45/1
Johan Manzambi (SUI)	45/1

BET SMART

Bull-ish on big Auburn turnaround

Getty Images

PLAINS TAKING OFF: QB Byrum Brown (above) is one of 11 ex-USF Bulls who will be joining coach Alex Golesh at Auburn this season. Michael Calabrese is taking the Tigers Over 6.5 wins and as long shots to reach the SEC title game and CFP field.

By MICHAEL CALABRESE

When folks count out Auburn, well, that's when things get interesting on The Plains. All you need to do is review the Tigers' win-loss record since 2000 to understand that the only constant for this program is change.

The Tigers bottomed out, both in 2008 (5-7) and 2012 (3-9), only to rally under new regimes. In 2010, the pairing of OC Gus Malzahn and Cam Newton delivered a national championship. When they parted ways with Gene Chizik and handed the reins to Malzahn in 2013, he engineered the most incredible run in college football history, culminating in a trip to the last BCS National Championship Game.

Why is now the time to be buying AU stock after five straight losing seasons? The staff and roster shake-up.

Alex Golesh arrives from South Florida with his hybrid Veer and Shoot offense in tow. And just like the package deal that changed Auburn's fortunes back in 2010, Golesh's offense has a dual-threat conductor at the ready. Byrum Brown followed Golesh from Tampa to Auburn after amassing over 4,100 total yards of offense to go along with his 42 touchdowns (28 pass, 14 rush). He became just the 12th FBS quarterback to reach the exclusive 3,000-1,000 club, while also knocking off nationally ranked Boise State and Florida along the way.

Golesh convinced 11 USF Bulls to transfer to Auburn to aid in the transition. But he was also wise enough to retain D.J. Durkin as his defensive coordinator. While the offense is a full gut-job, Durkin's defense finished inside the SP+ top 20 for the second consecutive year in 2025.

If Golesh and Brown can orchestrate a massive offensive turnaround (79th in Total O) and Durkin is calling plays for his third straight top 20 defense, how high is the Tigers' ceiling in 2026?

The second half of Auburn's October schedule features a murderers' row of opponents. The Tigers must travel to Georgia, host LSU, and hit the road again to face Ole Miss on three consecutive Saturdays. But their season's success will not hinge on those three games alone. There's a path to a 4-0 start.

Golesh's debut will come against Baylor at Mercedes-Benz Stadium. Historically, Auburn fans have flocked to Atlanta for these kickoff games, so I expect a 70/30 crowd split or better for AU. If the Tigers can ambush a Baylor side light on offensive continuity (102nd in returning production), there are more opportunities to build momentum in September. Southern Miss should be a speed bump for Auburn, while Florida, Vanderbilt and Tennessee are all breaking in green quarterbacks.

Presently, Action Network power rankings make Auburn a favorite in six games, a single-digit underdog in three, an 11-point underdog in a pair of roadies at Ole Miss and Alabama and a massive underdog at Georgia (+21). This explains why the Tigers' win total has settled in at 6.5, and their odds of reaching the SEC Championship and College Football Playoff are so long.

But under the hood, there are reasons to believe Auburn can shock the SEC this fall. It has run so unlucky from a one-score game perspective (1-12 in its last 13), that positive regression is likely in tighter games. Auburn is in line to face eight quarterbacks with two or fewer college starts.

And while Golesh made a name at the G5 level, he has shredded the SEC before as a play-caller. As Tennessee's OC in 2022, the Volunteers led the nation in scoring while knocking off six ranked opponents, including No. 2 Alabama. Hendon Hooker, his starting quarterback, led the nation in QBR (89.5).

Recommendations: Over 6.5 wins (-118, FanDuel); to reach SEC Championship Game (20/1 , Bet365); to make CFP field (+750, Bet365).

PERFECT MATCH

FRENCH CONNECTION: Rookie Pauline Astier has slotted into the starting lineup perfectly beside star guard Sabrina Ionescu, though coach Chris DeMarco will have a decision to make once previous starter Satou Sabally returns from injury. Noah K. Murray; Getty Images

Liberty may have finally found right fit in backcourt with Astier

By MADELINE KENNEY

Rookie guard Pauline Astier had been on Chris DeMarco's radar since he took the Liberty job.

He watched about 20 of her games with Turkish club USK Praha, believing she'd complement the style he wanted the Liberty to adopt.

He liked Astier's decisiveness and floor vision. Her ability to quickly get downhill, to catch and shoot. Her growing confidence every time she stepped foot on the court.

Then, he got to know Astier when she arrived in Brooklyn.

The way she's excited for her teammates and shares the ball. She defends and does all the little things a coach could ask for. When she's on the bench, she's cheering for every basket or stop.

"You love to coach a player like that who's just an awesome teammate and makes people around her better," DeMarco said Monday.

For years, Liberty general manager Jonathan Kolb has been searching for an ideal running mate for Sabrina Ionescu.

It turns out the answer may have been hidden in a bustling town in southwest France this entire time.

There have been different backcourt combinations over the years, each showing flashes of promise but also having limitations.

Marine Johannes brought creativity, flair and firepower on offense. Courtney Vandersloot supplied championship experience, elite playmaking and stability. Natasha Cloud added defensive intensity and toughness. Crystal Dangerfield had a stint at one point, too.

None of those pairings were seamless.

After last year's first-round playoff exit, Kolb said he planned to evaluate Ionescu's best backcourt partner.

Ionescu's recent renaissance alongside Astier might be the solution.

It took some time for Ionescu and Astier to develop their chemistry after Ionescu missed the majority of the first five weeks of the season with injuries. But the budding connection between the two is growing every time they share the floor.

"Her ability to be really unselfish and, honestly, read the game really well," Ionescu said. "She understands when she needs to shoot, when she needs to drive, she's a really good passer, her ability to get downhill and create for our offense, put pressure on the defense is elite. She's just really quick, her crafty getting to the basket, you have to respect all parts of her game, so her IQ is really high, she understands what her role is, how she can continue to impact both sides of the ball, offensively, defensively, so some of those things you can't really teach."

Tuesday
DALLAS WINGS AT LIBERTY
8 p.m.
ESPN

Astier is a key ingredient in DeMarco's offensive formula, allowing Ionescu to relocate off the ball and attack defenses already in motion.

"Pauline has the perfect mix of being aggressive and then also understanding when we have to get into our players and our actions and stuff like that," Jonquel Jones said. "I think she just does a really good job of playing off of all of us and I think her energy, her ability to be able to pick people up full court. … There is no big drop off. Defensively, she's really good. Offensively, she's really good. And so she really fits with us seamlessly."

When Satou Sabally clears concussion protocol, DeMarco will no doubt face a difficult lineup decision.

On paper, the obvious move would be returning to the expected starting lineup, featuring Sabally, and sliding Astier back to the bench. She'll handle it like a pro because that's the type of teammate and person Astier is.

But basketball isn't always played on paper, and the current starting unit has synergy.

The Liberty's best five-player lineup (minimum 45 minutes played) is Astier, Ionescu, Leonie Fiebich, Breanna Stewart and Jones.

But don't expect DeMarco to make a starting lineup decision any sooner than he has to.

"What I've learned this year is, it's day to day," he said. "There's no point in thinking about it until it comes up. There's too much happening and people been in and out. … We'll have a discussion, for sure, but really happy with the way the starting lineup is going right now, and whether Satou starts or not, she's been phenomenal all year in her role."

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'Different team' hopes to show up to rematch

By MADELINE KENNEY

The Liberty had no answers for 2026 top pick Azzi Fudd when she blitzed them in the second half of a loss earlier this season.

Paige Bueckers gave them problems, too.

Fudd, Bueckers and the rest of the surging Dallas Wings are set to return to Brooklyn on Tuesday for another tilt against two of the league's best teams.

In the previous May 24 meeting, the Wings exposed the Liberty's shoddy transition defense.

Fudd specifically lit the Libs up with several 3s on the break. She shot 6-for-9 from deep in the second half and finished with 24 points.

LIBERTY NOTES

That game sort of served as a wake-up call.

The Liberty lost the following night to the Portland Fire before rattling off eight straight wins.

They have since beaten the Atlanta Dream and Las Vegas Aces on the road. The Libs won the Commissioner's Cup by toppling the Aces last week before taking down the league-leading Minnesota Lynx on Friday.

"I feel like we're a completely different team from who we were when we first saw them," Sabrina Ionescu said. "We've continued to get better every game, and I feel like we're at a different pace now than we were then. So for us, it's just controlling what we can, continuing to get better as a team collectively on both sides of the ball."

The Liberty have been in a state of building since training camp. They have a new coaching staff and several new players. Coach Chris DeMarco has stressed the importance of working toward the postseason.

Injuries have stalled some of that work.

Since Ionescu returned in mid-June, though, the Liberty seem to be garnering momentum.

The next step in this building process?

"The build is putting 40 minutes together," DeMarco said. "We have to keep being consistent."

➤ **Leonie Fiebich** (foot soreness) and **Satou Sabally** (concussion protocol) sat out Monday's practice.

Both are considered "day to day," per DeMarco.

Fiebich's foot issue flared up after Friday's win against the Lynx. She's questionable for Tuesday's game.

Stanton still without a timeline to return

By GREG JOYCE

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — Two-plus months after the Yankees waited a few days to see if he could avoid an injured list stint altogether, Giancarlo Stanton remains without any real timeline to return to the active roster.

After suffering a setback with his right calf strain last month, when he appeared to be a few days away from being activated from the IL, Stanton is still not running again, according to manager Aaron Boone, as his rehab remains slow-moving.

GIANCARLO STANTON

Asked if he expects the veteran slugger to play again this season, Boone said he did.

"Now, that being said, I'm surprised it's been this long," Boone said Monday at Tropicana Field before the Yankees beat the Rays 5-1. "But yes, I expect him back."

Stanton missed his 64th straight game Monday and did not join the Yankees on this trip, despite injured players often doing so in order to rehab at the club's player development complex in Tampa.

YANKEES NOTES

Boone did not have much in the way of specifics as to what Stanton is doing other than not yet running; he had advanced to running the bases before getting reinjured last month. The manager had said last Monday that Stanton was "moving again with more intensity and hitting against velo[city] again," though as of this Monday, Boone only said the 36-year-old was "upping the treadmill stuff he's doing."

"I don't know that it's [a] slower [buildup after the setback], we've just been listening to the body and following when he has gotten the images and things like that," Boone said. "What he's been able to tolerate, we've been able to do."

➤ **Jasson Domínguez** and Boone both got upset in the seventh inning after home plate umpire Emil Jimenez did not allow Domínguez to challenge a low called strike despite him tapping his helmet fairly quickly after the pitch — a repeat of what happened last month with the same hitter and umpire at Yankee Stadium.

Domínguez also tried to challenge a high strike called by Jimenez during a June 17 game, but the umpire did not grant either one.

"The same thing happened and [Jimenez] pointed to the dugout like it was influenced by us," Boone said. "The dugout's always going to react. He did it instantaneously. It's a bad call, it's a bad look and I don't get it. I know it's this crew, they're sticklers for being immediate and all that. It was pretty immediate. The challenge absolutely should've been allowed like it absolutely should've been allowed a couple weeks ago."

Boone said he did not stick around for a full explanation "because I was going to lose my mind."

➤ After leaving Sunday's game early with right big toe discomfort, **Jazz Chisholm Jr**. was back in the lineup Monday playing second base and going 0-for-2 with a walk. ... The Yankees are waiting on naming a starter for Thursday's series finale to see how their bullpen looks, though **Elmer Rodríguez** would be the obvious call-up candidate for a spot start.

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Senga expected to log innings vs. K.C.

By MIKE PUMA

ATLANTA — Two straight decent Kodai Senga outings have left the Mets hopeful the right-hander can be trusted again.

Senga will get another chance Tuesday when he is expected to pitch against the Royals, likely in a bulk relief role. Senga has pitched respectably in relief since his removal from the starting rotation.

"I realize there's been a couple of home runs, but he's been great," interim manager Andy Green said before the Mets' 7-6, extra-inning win over the Braves on Monday. "The forkball has been really good for him and he's attacked hitters and we're encouraged."

Senga allowed one earned run over $2\frac{2}{3}$ innings against the Braves in a relief appearance Friday. It followed a five-inning relief outing against the Phillies with two earned runs allowed. Overall, Senga has pitched to an 8.66 ERA this season.

METS NOTES

"He's got an unbelievable pedigree, being one of the better starters in major league baseball," Green said. "I would love to see him to continue to move back to being great."

➤ The Mets acquired right-hander **Matt Seelinger**, a Long Island native, from the Tigers for cash considerations. The 31-year-old reliever, a career minor leaguer, had a 3.89 ERA in 27 appearances this season for Triple-A Toledo.

➤ **Ronny Mauricio** started at shortstop, giving **Francisco Lindor** a DH night. Mauricio began the day with a .435 OPS in 16 games and went 1-for-4 Monday.

"He can do a ton of damage when he gets a pitch that he can drive," Green said.

➤ **Bo Bichette** began the day with a .350/.373/564 slash line with five homers and 22 RBIs over his previous 29 games, dating to June 3. The veteran infielder ranked third in the major leagues with 41 hits over that stretch. He kept it going Monday by going 2-for-5 at the plate.

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COMPARE NOTES

Knicks get steady backup center in Drummond for fraction of Mitch's price

Charles Wenzelberg / NY Post

BARGAIN BIN: Though the Knicks lost a versatile defender and strong rebounder in Mitchell Robinson (left), who bolted New York for Boston on a three-year, $47.4 million deal, they gained a similarly-sized backup center in Andre Drummond at a huge discount.

By JARED SCHWARTZ

If it didn't feel real before, Mitchell Robinson painting his truck in Celtics green cemented the reality that he is no longer a Knick.

That means both the good and bad — on and off the court — that came with him will no longer be part of the Knicks equation. Instead, it will be Andre Drummond — for a fraction of the price — the Knicks will rely on next year to be an impactful backup center.

How do Robinson and Drummond compare? What differences should be expected? What, exactly, are the Knicks getting with their new big man?

Let's break it down:

The similarities

- They have similar size, with the 6-foot-11 Drummond listed 1 inch shorter than Robinson. But Drummond is much heavier, listed at 279 pounds compared to Robinson at 240.
- Their skill sets are comparable. They both are at their best as rebounders and rim protectors who are usually most effective used in shorter spurts. Their usage was almost identical last year — Drummond averaged 19.5 minutes per game in the regular season compared to Robinson's 19.6. As for their production, Drummond averaged 6.3 points, 8.4 rebounds (3.2 offensive) and 0.8 blocks per game. Robinson averaged 5.7 points, 8.8 rebounds (4.2 offensive) and 1.2 blocks per game.
- Most of their points come from putbacks and alley oops. Neither has a polished post-up game.
- Both are strong screen-setters.

The differences

- Robinson was much more versatile defensively. Part of what made Robinson such a weapon was his ability to guard 1-through-5 on the court. He was not exposed when he switched onto guards and wings — him stifling Jayson Tatum on the perimeter in the 2025 playoffs is etched into every Knicks fan's mind. In the Finals, he was able to guard Victor Wembanyama in the paint and on the perimeter.

Drummond, on the other hand, is a much more one-dimensional defender. He is solid when matched up against bigs, but he is not someone the Knicks will want checking guards and wings. He is not as agile or mobile as Robinson.

- Drummond, who was similarly a brutal free-throw shooter early in his career, has developed into a competent enough one at this point. He shot 63.1 percent from the line last year, which won't wow many people but is certainly good enough to avoid teams intentionally fouling him.

Robinson shot 40.8 percent in the regular season and then a hard-to-believe 29.3 percent in the postseason. Opponents' ability to utilize Hack-a-Mitch repeatedly derailed the Knicks offense and meant Robinson had to be taken out of games.

- Drummond has recently emerged as someone who can knock down the occasional 3-pointer, especially from the corners — he shot 35.6 percent from deep last year, taking 1.4 per game. Robinson has not taken a 3-pointer in his career.
- The 32-year-old Drummond's best basketball is behind him. The Celtics are banking on the 28-year-old Robinson unlocking a new level with them.
- Drummond brings with him way fewer question marks, whether it be injury problems, off-the-court drama or conditioning. He is very much a known quantity who has been around for a long time at a lot of different stops.

Verdict

There is a reason Robinson will make over $15 million a year and Drummond will make the veteran minimum. Robinson is someone, as Knicks fans saw over and over, who was single-handedly able to come off the bench and change the direction of games. When he is clicking, there is no better offensive rebounder in the league.

Drummond will not often take over games, as Robinson was capable of doing. He is better viewed as someone who should provide steady relief for when Karl-Anthony Towns needs a breather.

For the price, though, the Knicks seemingly got a strong replacement.

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Stevens: Brown trade gives Celtics 'increased optionality'

By CHRISTIAN ARNOLD

Celtics president of basketball operations Brad Stevens spent Monday afternoon trying to justify trading away Jaylen Brown as Boston fans stewed in anger and confusion over seeing another star depart the organization.

Brown was traded to the rival 76ers in a deal that included the Celtics receiving Paul George and draft picks, which Stevens said helped give Boston "optionality" going forward. The Celtics executive expressed appreciation for Brown's contributions to the organization, but outright said that he did not want 70 percent of their salary cap tied up between two players — Brown and Jayson Tatum.

Even with Stevens saying Monday that Brown's contract made it more difficult to field a competitive roster, the decision to trade the star has still been a shock after he produced an MVP-caliber season during the 2025-26 season.

"We're not up here to defend ourselves in this decision, which will certainly be scrutinized," Stevens said. "We're OK with that. We're more so trying to deal with the emotions of Jaylen not being here."

George's contract is slightly more cap friendly than Brown's, with George having a cap hit of $57.7 million this upcoming season and a player option for 2027-28 that has a cap hit of $56.5 million. Brown has three more years on his deal, with him being owed the same amount this coming season, while making $61.6 million the following season and $65.6 million for the 2028-29 campaign.

"I think when you choose the term 'optionality,' you're talking about just length of contract and assets, so that's where the increased optionality comes from," Stevens said when asked directly about the similar salaries. "And listen, we're going to have to lean on our depth. This is a big part of this."

Stevens denied that Brown was disgruntled or that the Celtics had been disgruntled with him, and expressed appreciation for his 10 years in Boston, describing the former Celtics star as "a meaningful person in all of our lives."

"We all appreciate Jaylen. We've all enjoyed having Jaylen as a teammate. I think he's got great relationships from here," Stevens said.

Celtics lead governor Bill Chisholm also addressed the growing feeling that there has been some mandate from ownership to bring down the team's roster salary.

Since the Celtics' title run in 2024, Boston has seen Jrue Holiday and Kristaps Porzingis, among others, depart the franchise. Chisholm pushed back on that, saying all decisions were basketball ones.

"It's not about the money at all. This was trying to put together the right set of players and assets to win," he said. " ... None of these were about money. We have some more room now, like if we see something we wanted, Brad's got the green light to do that."

Sally Brompton Daily Horoscope

DISCOVER MORE ABOUT YOURSELF AND WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS AT SALLYBROMPTON.COM

♋ CANCER
(June 22-July 23)

Most things seem to be going your way now, but a situation on the work front is still worrying you a bit and you need to get past it. The planets indicate it is of no real consequence in the greater scheme of things, so ignore it!

♌ LEO
(July 24-Aug. 23)

Someone you meet on your travels will say all the right things and almost persuade you to drop what you are doing and follow their cause. But what does that little voice at the back of your mind say? It says it's a trick, so be extra careful.

♍ VIRGO
(Aug. 24-Sept. 23)

Before you embark on something new, you must work out how much it is going to cost you, not just right away but as an ongoing commitment well into the future. Could there be a cheaper, and equally exciting, alternative? Yes, there could.

♎ LIBRA
(Sept. 24-Oct. 23)

Something you thought was bad will suddenly look good, and something you thought was good will start to look less enticing. With Neptune turning retrograde, your best course of action by far is to stick with the status quo . . . for now.

♏ SCORPIO
(Oct. 24-Nov. 22)

The more you try to cheer someone up, the more depressed they seem to become, which suggests they secretly enjoy wallowing in their own misery. In which case you might as well encourage them to get on with it. Don't let them drag you down too.

♐ SAGITTARIUS
(Nov. 23 - Dec. 21)

If you are finding it hard to explain something to a friend, it's most likely because Neptune's influence is blocking up their ears. If they cannot even understand words of three syllables or less, you might as well give up on them.

♑ CAPRICORN
(Dec. 22 - Jan. 20)

If you tell even the smallest of lies over the next 24 hours it will come back to haunt you later on, so stick to the truth even if it causes you some short-term discomfort. Make it a point of principle to focus only on facts.

♒ AQUARIUS
(Jan. 21 - Feb. 19)

A lot of what is taking place around you at the moment may seem confusing, but there is a method behind the madness, so accept that it will all make sense eventually. In the meantime, try not to take life so seriously. Smile more and worry less.

♓ PISCES
(Feb. 20-Mar. 20)

Your ruling planet Neptune begins its retrograde phase today, which means that over the next few months you won't always be able to trust what your mind is telling you. The worst kind of deception is self-deception, so be truthful with yourself.

♈ ARIES
(March 21-April 20)

If someone you asked for assistance a while back now says they cannot help you, it may be a blessing in disguise. According to the planets, they don't really know what they are doing, so how could they possibly know what is good for you?

♉ TAURUS
(April 21-May 21)

The best way to get past an emotional problem is to focus on an activity that brings you nothing but good vibes. Yes, of course, the problem won't just go away, but a bit of time out and a bit of perspective could help you resolve it.

♊ GEMINI
(May 22-June 21)

You may be inclined to shut down what you've been working on and start again from scratch but that would be foolish. As Neptune, planet of illusion, begins its retrograde phase this probably isn't the best time to do anything overly dramatic.

BIRTHDAY TUESDAY

If you approach life as some kind of cosmic challenge, you will have a lot of fun this year. Don't listen to those who try to scare you with tales of doom and gloom, because they don't know what they are talking about. The world is a wonderful place.

Post Weather Report

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Tuesday

Today: Cloudy and humid with a passing shower. High 70 to 76.

Tonight: Cloudy. Low 61 to 67.

Wednesday

Tomorrow: Partly sunny, warmer and less humid. High 79 to 85.

Tomorrow night: Partly cloudy. Low 68 to 74.

Thursday

A t-storm around. High 83 to 89.

Evening

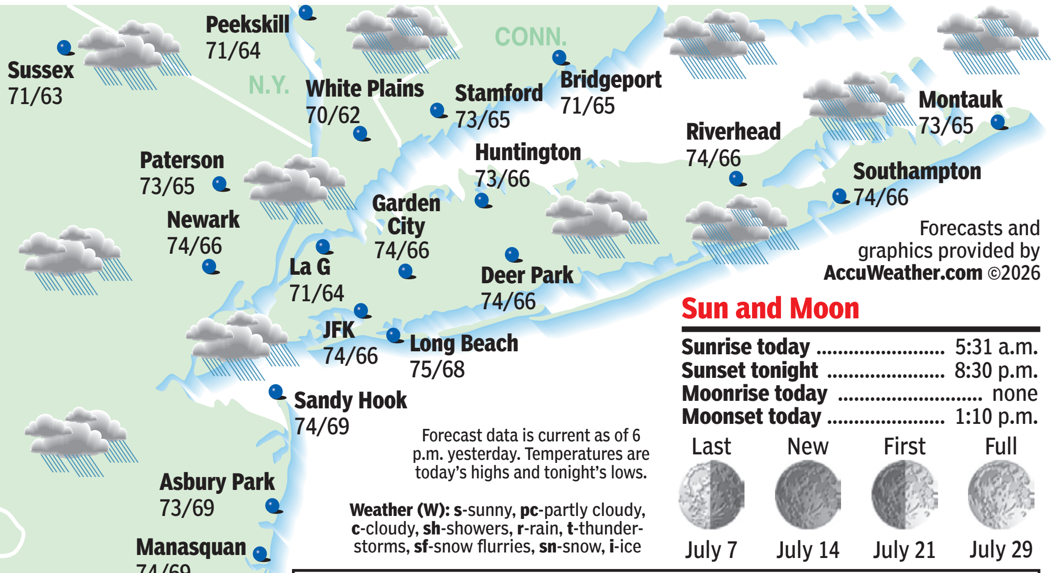
A shower early. Low 70 to 76.

Friday

Showers/ t-storms. High 86 to 92.

Evening

Humid. Low 70 to 76.



Sussex 71/63
Peekskill 71/64
N.Y.
CONN.
White Plains 70/62
Stamford 73/65
Bridgeport 71/65
Riverhead 74/66
Montauk 73/65
Paterson 73/65
Huntington 73/66
Southampton 74/66
Newark 74/66
Garden City 74/66
La G 71/64
Deer Park 74/66
JFK 74/66
Long Beach 75/68
Sandy Hook 74/69
Asbury Park 73/69
Manasquan 74/69
Toms River 74/68
N.J.
Long Beach 74/70
Atlantic City 81/68
Ocean City 77/70

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Forecast data is current as of 6 p.m. yesterday. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.

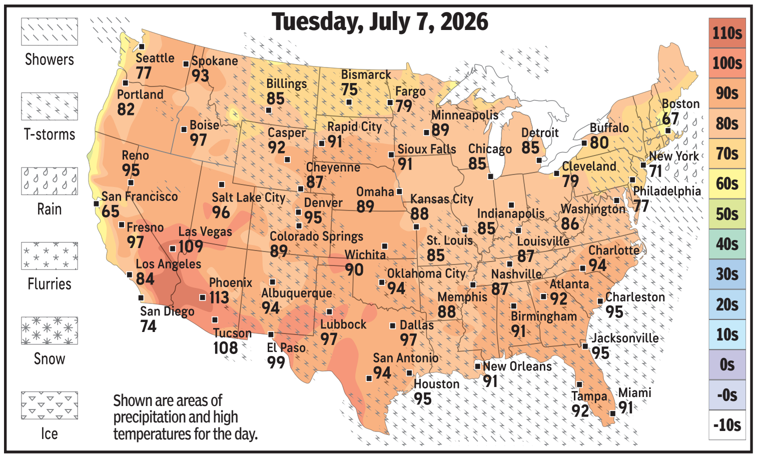
Weather (W): s-sunny, **pc**-partly cloudy, **c**-cloudy, **sh**-showers, **r**-rain, **t**-thunderstorms, **sf**-snow flurries, **sn**-snow, **i**-ice

Sun and Moon

Sunrise today .... 5:31 a.m.
Sunset tonight .... 8:30 p.m.
Moonrise today .... none
Moonset today .... 1:10 p.m.

Last	New	First	Full
July 7	July 14	July 21	July 29

Tuesday, July 7, 2026



Showers
T-storms
Rain
Flurries
Snow
Ice
110s
100s
90s
80s
70s
60s
50s
40s
30s
20s
10s
0s
-0s
-10s
Seattle 77
Spokane 93
Portland 82
Billings 85
Bismarck 75
Fargo 79
Boise 97
Casper 92
Rapid City 91
Minneapolis 89
Detroit 85
Buffalo 80
Boston 67
Reno 95
Sioux Falls 91
Chicago 85
Cheyenne 87
Cleveland 79
New York 71
San Francisco 65
Salt Lake City 96
Denver 95
Omaha 89
Kansas City 88
Indianapolis 85
Washington 86
Philadelphia 77
Fresno 97
Las Vegas 109
Colorado Springs 89
St. Louis 85
Louisville 87
Wichita 90
Charlotte 94
Los Angeles 84
Oklahoma City 94
Nashville 87
Phoenix 113
Albuquerque 94
Memphis 88
Atlanta 92
Charleston 95
San Diego 74
Birmingham 91
Tucson 108
El Paso 99
Lubbock 97
Dallas 97
Jacksonville 95
San Antonio 94
New Orleans 91
Houston 95
Tampa 92
Miami 91

Shown are areas of precipitation and high temperatures for the day.

Almanac

YESTERDAY'S CONDITIONS AT CENTRAL PARK THROUGH 6PM

Temperature
High: 69, Low: 65, Mean: 67

Departure from Normal
Yesterday: -10 degrees

Precipitation
Yesterday: 0.90”, Month: 1.34”,
Year: 19.16”, Normal year to date: 24.47”

Cooling Degree days yesterday..................2
Total for the month (normal)...........95 (71)
Total since Jan. 1 (normal)...........495 (379)
Last year to date 408
Heat Index (at noon yest.) 69
UV index (for Tue.) .... 2 (Low)
Humidity (at noon) 100%

AIR QUALITY
Pollen: Low Predominant pollen: Trees, Weeds
AQI rating: (for Tue.).....................Moderate

New York Tides

High Tide for	TODAY 1st	TODAY 2nd	TOMORROW 1st	TOMORROW 2nd
Coney Island	1:07a	1:46p	2:01a	2:37p
Fire Island	1:17a	1:57p	2:04a	2:54p
Hempstead	4:52a	5:21p	5:49a	6:16p
Huntington	5:02a	5:29p	5:59a	6:24p
Jones Inlet	12:51a	1:30p	1:45a	2:21p
Montauk Point	2:31a	3:24p	3:22a	4:16p
Port Washington	4:50a	5:18p	5:47a	6:14p
Sandy Hook	1:11a	1:50p	2:05a	2:41p

Regional cities

Regional cities	TODAY	TOMORROW
Albany	69/58/r	84/66/pc
Danbury	71/62/r	84/65/pc
Glens Falls	71/54/pc	84/62/pc
Gr Barrington	68/57/r	82/61/pc
Kingston	69/63/r	85/64/pc
Liberty	67/59/r	78/61/pc
Monticello	69/56/r	80/60/pc
Newburgh	70/63/r	83/65/pc
Poughkeepsie	71/60/r	84/64/pc
Saratoga Springs	73/59/pc	85/64/pc
Stroudsburg	71/63/c	83/66/pc
Torrington	69/61/r	84/64/pc
Syracuse	76/60/pc	86/68/pc

World cities

World cities	TODAY	TOMORROW
Athens	92/70/s	91/73/s
Baghdad	113/88/s	107/87/s
Beijing	90/70/sh	91/72/c
Berlin	73/53/r	75/54/pc
Cairo	95/72/pc	94/73/pc
Dublin	76/57/pc	75/56/pc
Geneva	94/61/c	95/65/s
Hong Kong	88/80/t	88/81/r
Jerusalem	83/68/s	82/66/s
Kabul	89/66/pc	90/67/pc
London	88/65/pc	90/68/s
Madrid	103/73/s	103/73/s
Mexico City	75/55/r	73/56/r
Montreal	83/64/s	86/70/pc
Moscow	66/57/sh	69/60/sh
Paris	95/61/c	93/69/s
Rio de Janeiro	76/67/pc	71/65/sh
Rome	88/68/s	88/68/s
Sydney	63/54/sh	63/53/sh
Tokyo	83/71/pc	87/72/c

DRAMA CLASS

Mets eke out series split in Atlanta — though not before weathering pair of rallies

By MIKE PUMA

METS 7
BRAVES 6
10 innings
Box. / P. 34

ATLANTA — In those rare instances they succeed, the Mets only do things the hard way.

The easy way Monday night would have been to ride Juan Soto's go-ahead homer in the ninth inning to the finish line without extra hassle. Instead, Devin Williams imploded in the bottom of the inning, and it took a 10th-inning hero.

Luis Torrens became that guy with a two-run double that lifted the Mets to a 7-6 victory over the Braves and four-game series split.

Luke Weaver got the final three outs with only the automatic runner scoring (an unearned run), extending his streak to 26 innings without an earned run allowed since May 1.

"They have very good players over there and we showed that we can beat them and at least split the series," Soto said. "Positive stuff."

Williams was handed a two-run lead in the ninth inning and promptly surrendered a game-tying homer to Matt Olson. After the homer — a blast to left field that followed Ozzie Albies' leadoff double — the Braves got runners to second and third with two outs. Williams was removed and Brooks Raley struck out José Azócar.

With two outs in the top of the 10th inning, Jared Young was hit by a pitch before Torrens stroked a two-run double. The veteran backup catcher has shown a knack for such big hits in his three seasons with the Mets.

"For me, it's just trying to pick the team up whatever way I can," Torrens said through an interpreter. "It's really just concentrating on the at-bat and the approach there."

After going 0-67 last year when trailing after eight innings, the Mets were 1-45 in such games this year before Monday's comeback.

"It was gutsy tonight, for sure," interim manager Andy Green said. "Some huge swings late."

In the ninth, Francisco Alvarez and Ronny Mauricio each singled against Raisel Iglesias before Soto with two outs worked the count to 3-1 and crushed a 95-mph fastball over the right field fence to put the Mets ahead 5-3.

The Mets overcame an early Young error and two runners thrown out on the bases.

Young misplayed a grounder at first base that led to two unearned runs in the second inning. Bo Bichette was thrown out at the plate attempting to score from first base as the second out in the sixth and A.J. Ewing got nabbed off second base on a line drive to third in the seventh, completing the trifecta.

Freddy Peralta, hindered by an elevated pitch count, lasted only 4 ²/₃ innings and allowed three runs, two unearned, on six hits with six strikeouts and one walk. It was an improved performance over his four-inning outing in Toronto last Wednesday in which he surrendered five earned runs, but the Mets needed additional length. He departed after throwing 103 pitches.

"I feel good about some things mentally I have been working on, but also my pitches were pretty good and my sweeper was amazing," Peralta said. "I wish I at least finished the fifth, but other than that everything was [good]."

Carson Benge's homer leading off the second gave the Mets a 1-0 lead. Benge's blast was his 11th this season. He hammered a 1-2 slider from Reynaldo Lopez, clearing the fence in left-center.

But the Mets surrendered the lead with sloppy play in the bottom of the inning. Young mishandled Mike Yastrzemski's grounder for an error, leading to two unearned runs. Jim Jarvis delivered a bloop single for the first run. Michel Harris II singled in the second run. The rally started with Dominic Smith's single before with two outs Young misplayed Yastrzemski's grounder.

Olson homered leading off the third to increase the Mets' deficit to 3-1.

The Braves threatened against Peralta in the fifth, but the right-hander escaped — with an assist from lefty reliever Cionel Pérez, who recorded the final out. Albies doubled and Drake Baldwin was hit by a pitch before a wild pitch advanced the runners. But Peralta struck out Mauricio Dubón before Pérez retired Joey Bart.

The Mets pulled to within 3-2 on Alvarez's RBI single in the sixth, but a potentially larger inning was thwarted because Bichette was thrown out at the plate attempting to score from first on Benge's one-out double. Brett Baty left the tying run at third base by striking out to conclude the inning.

In the seventh, Ewing and Soto walked in succession with one out before Bichette's line drive was gloved by Austin Riley, who fired to second to catch Ewing trying to retreat.

mpuma@nypost.com

ON DECK: vs. Royals

Tuesday, 7:10 p.m., SNY, WHSQ (880 AM

TBD

2026 stats: –

Career vs. KC: –

Last start: –

PITCH BREAKDOWN

–%	–%	–%
–	–	–

RHP Seth Lugo

2026 stats: 3-6, 4.20 ERA

Career vs. NYM: First appearance

Last start: Wed., vs. STL; 6 IP, 9 H, 3 ER

PITCH BREAKDOWN

20%	17%	16%
Sinker	4-Seamer	Cutter

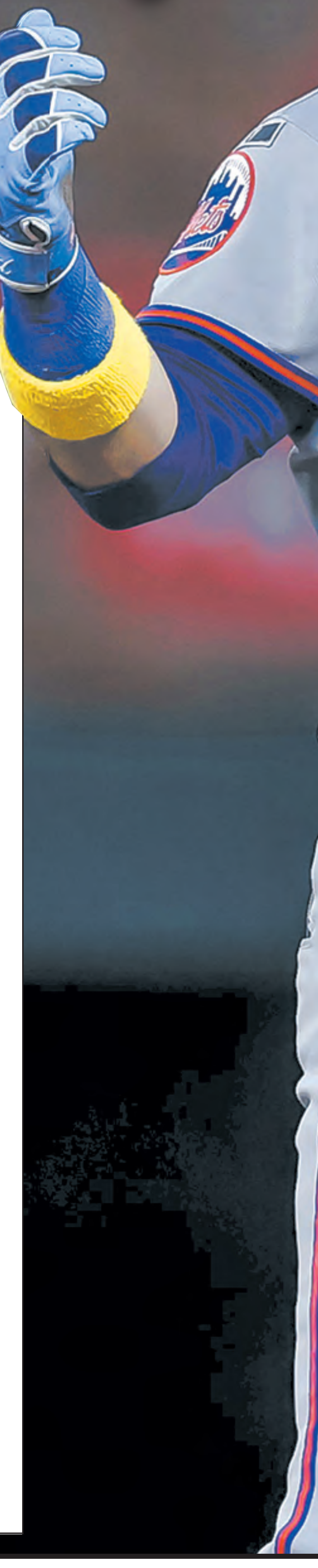
UP NEXT

WED.: vs. Royals, 7:10 p.m., SNY, WHSQ
RHP Christian Scott vs. TBD

THUR.: vs. Royals, 1:10 p.m., SNY, WHSQ
LHP Sean Manaea vs. RHP Michael Wacha

INJURY REPORT

- **Clay Holmes** is continuing to throw from a mound while rehabbing a right fibula fracture. The right-hander is expected back with the Mets next month.



DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY: Mets catcher Luis Torrens looks skyward after hitting the go-ahead, two-run double during the 10th inning Monday night in Atlanta. The hit proved to be the winner, and it was necessary after reliever Devin Williams (inset) allowed the Braves to tie the game in the bottom of the ninth when he served up a two-run home run to Matt Olson. AP; Imagn Images

Weaver learned key to surviving lost year during 110-loss ’21

By MIKE PUMA

ATLANTA — This isn’t Luke Weaver’s first journey through the desert of a lost season.

The Mets still have nearly three months of games remaining, facing long odds of climbing back into the postseason race. Weaver, the club’s most valuable reliever, understands better than most the importance of keeping focus to prevent complete disorder.

Pitching for a Diamondbacks team that lost 110 games in 2021 served as a classroom for Weaver. What did he learn?

“That it’s super easy to get complacent, to accept the situation,” Weaver said Monday before the Mets topped the Braves 7-6 in 10 innings. “The team element is what provides the wins and losses on the field, so you have got to be motivated by your own career, and then within that you are hoping to perform in a way that provides wins on the field. When you are not doing that, you have got to look in the mirror and figure out a way to do a better job.”

Weaver said he’s begun conveying that message.

The Mets began play 37-53, a half-game ahead of the Rockies for the National League’s worst record. It’s a team that will head toward the Aug. 3 trade deadline with several veteran pieces available for contenders.

Weaver, who entered the day with a 1.95 ERA in 35 appearances, could be among those players available. But the right-hander is signed through next season to a contract that pays him $22 million over the two years. The Mets simply could decide he’s too valuable toward next season to unload.

“It’s not something that I get to have a decision in,” Weaver said. “My commitment began in December of trying to win and do the best I could for two years, and I am completely committed to that, and I look at the day to day as always trying to win and get better in my own game and try to help others. If that’s still the same vision for [the Mets], it’s always been the same vision for me.”

The bullpen has pitched to a high level — as the club’s strength — with Brooks Raley, A.J. Minter, Huascar Brazobán and Devin Williams as the integral parts. Williams said the relievers take pride in knowing that as a unit they have largely met the challenge.

“Absolutely, and it’s not even to be said,” Weaver said. “We all have our jobs, and we all have to do them individually. But we have groups; we have different positions. [The relievers] want to be the last line of defense. We don’t want to be people that you count on ever. We want the starter to go nine innings. We want the offense to obliterate the other team. We want to stand by and admire our games, but at the end of the day, when called upon, we know it’s short.

FAMILIAR FAILURE : Mets reliever Luke Weaver, who picked up the save Monday night, was with the Diamondbacks in 2021 when they lost 110 games and learned how “easy” it can be ”to get complacent” when the team is not winning. AP

“We know it’s got to be direct and blunt, and we have got to do our job and pick each other up. We have done a good job of that. We stay tight, we call each other out, we do things in a respectful, professional manner, and I think that is just what a good family does.”

Weaver’s scoreless streak dating back to May 1, which had spanned 23 appearances and 25 innings entering Monday, was snapped when he allowed automatic runner José Azócar to score in the 10th inning for an unearned run — though he now carries a 26-inning streak without allowing an earned run. Over that stretch, he’d pitched to a 0.60 WHIP.

“These things are tough because it’s easy to want to think about it,” Weaver said of the streak. “Sometimes it’s easy to fall into the pressure of, ‘How long can it go, when is it going to break?’ The negative, the positive, there’s a lot that goes with it. What I have learned is I am OK either way. I want to put up a zero as I expect to, but if I don’t, then hopefully I am going to live another day and try to figure out the fix and go continue to work hard and be better.”

THE SLIGHT STUFF!

Cam, Cabby turn perceived put-downs into motivation as Bombers get much-needed win

By GREG JOYCE

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — As has been the case too often during their recent stretch of offensive futility, the Yankees were three-hit Monday night.

But José Caballero and Ben Rice got their money's worth, and Cam Schlittler made sure they were enough.

Caballero clobbered a pair of home runs, Rice added another and Schlittler delivered a masterful bounce-back pitching performance, the combination lifting the Yankees to a much-needed and clean 5-1 win over the Rays to open a critical four-game showdown at Tropicana Field.

YANKEES	**5**
RAYS	**1**

Summary Page 33

On a night when he dazzled across eight dominant innings, Schlittler made the three home runs stand up to lift the Yankees (50-40) to just their second win in the last 11 games, this one pulling them within three games of the Rays (52-36) for the AL East lead.

Schlitter was nearly untouchable, scattering just four soft-hit singles — all off the bat at 73.6 mph or softer — and no walks while striking out eight. The right-hander was coming off the worst start of his young career, when he gave up a career-high six runs and four home runs in four innings last week against the Tigers.

"They want to say that there's f--king regression because I had one bad outing, so again, it was personal to go out there and have a dominant start and put this team in the right position," said Schlittler, who has become known for using any kind of perceived slight to his advantage.

YES, HE CAM: Cam Schlittler receives high-fives in the Yankees dugout after eight dominant innings. The Yanks managed just three hits, but they were all home runs — two by José Caballero (right) and one by Ben Rice (inset). Getty Images (3)

That is not dissimilar to Caballero, who acknowledged having an extra chip on his shoulder while facing the team that traded him to the Yankees last summer.

"The environment, the people here, facing my old teammates, it's just the little things that get me going," said Caballero, who now has two multi-homer games in his career, both against the Rays.

The Yankees needed every bit of juice from Schlittler and Caballero to squeeze out the win and kick off in style about as big a series as July can offer.

They had led the Rays by as many as 3 1/2 games on June 17. It was a three-game lead on June 24, after which the Yankees dropped nine of 10 — including four straight games in which they were three-hit — and the Rays won nine of 11, putting Tampa Bay four games up entering Monday's series.

"I feel like we dug ourselves a hole a little bit, so it was good to go out there and get the first one," Schlittler said. "We got a chance to shake things up."

The night started like so many others have lately for the Yankees, as their first 13 hitters were retired in order against Rays righty Griffin Jax.

But then Jasson Domínguez and Jazz Chisholm Jr. drew back-to-back walks with one out in the fifth inning to bring up Caballero, who drilled a three-run shot to left field — flush with an emphatic bat flip — for the 3-0 lead.

Caballero, starting at shortstop over Anthony Volpe in what Aaron Boone described as a "day-by-day" situation, then took Chris Roycroft deep in the eighth inning — again chucking his bat toward the Yankees dugout — to make it 4-1 on his career-high 10th home run of the season.

"I'm trying to spark the team somehow, some way," Caballero said. "We're struggling right now, going through a bad stretch. Something that can get the team going a little bit and get them excited is always good. That's the reason why [for the bat flips]."

Rice later added his 25th homer of the year in the ninth inning for an insurance run, marking the first time in the modern era in which the Yankees won a game with all three of their hits being home runs. They also became the first team in the modern era to do it while striking out 17 times.

"Obviously a win we needed and felt good to play well," Boone said. "It's still a grind for us offensively, but obviously some long balls were huge."

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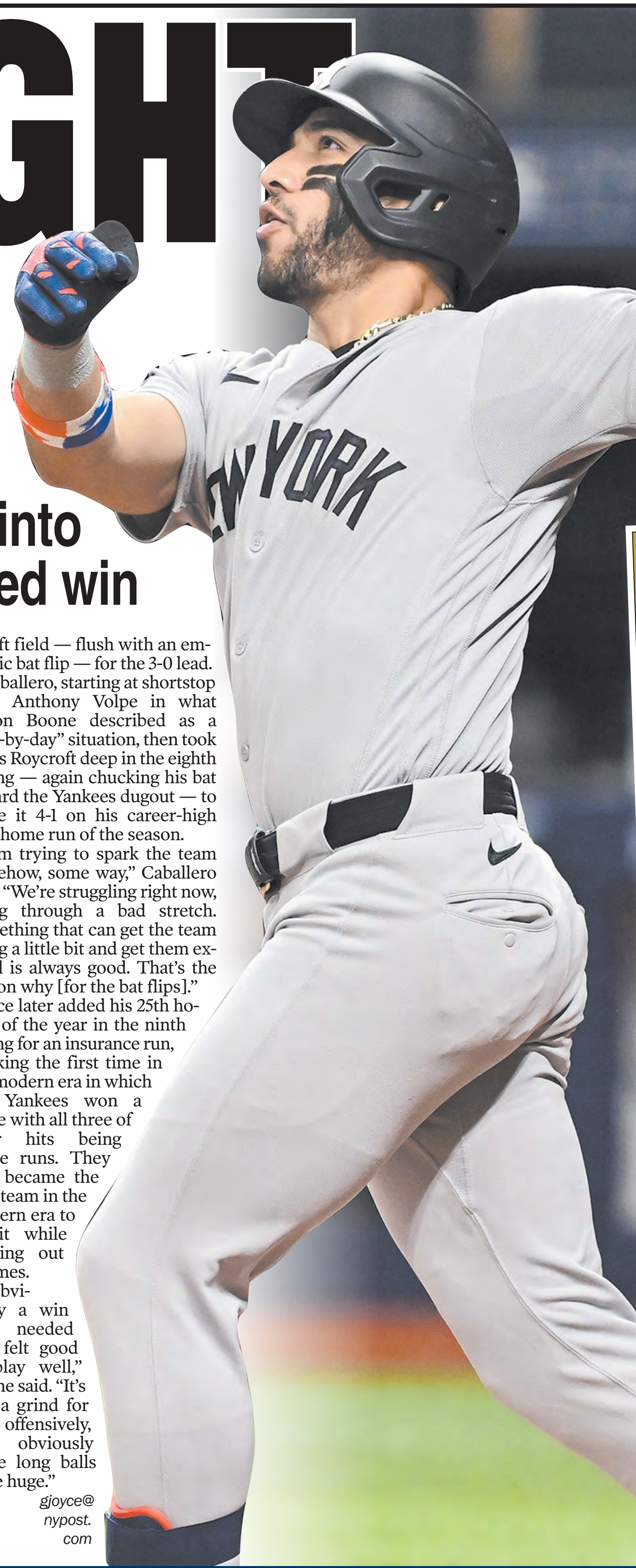

Montefiore Einstein *Official Hospital of the New York Yankees*

Yanks' list of needs keeps on growing

By GREG JOYCE

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — The MLB draft is set to take place this weekend, meaning that by Sunday night, front offices around the sport will be able to turn their full attention to the much bigger event: the Aug. 3 trade deadline.

For the Yankees, their list of needs seems a bit bigger and more pressing than it might have been a month ago, before they sustained more injuries and spiraled into losing nine of their previous 10 games and 12 of 15 before Cam Schlittler and company steadied the ship for a night with a 5-1 win over the Rays at Tropicana Field.

They still do not know when Aaron Judge will come back from the injured list, other than saying that they expect him to play again this season. Giancarlo Stanton does not seem much closer in his own extended stay on the IL, still not running after suffering a setback with his calf last month. Caros Rodón has joined Max Fried and Clarke Schmidt on the IL while top prospect Carlos Lagrange, who was expected to help the bullpen in a call-up from Triple-A, now seems doubtful to pitch again this season.

With all of that in mind, here's a look at where the Yankees stand with regards to the trade deadline, now less than a month away:

Catcher

The Yankees have the lowest OPS in the majors from their backstops, as Austin Wells, J.C. Escarra and Ali Sánchez have combined for a paltry .504 OPS — due in large part to Wells, whose .483 OPS was the lowest among 244 hitters who had at least 200 plate appearances entering Monday.

That has only intensified the need to bring in a catcher at the deadline, particularly a righty-hitting one.

The obvious fit is Twins backstop Ryan Jeffers, who has a history with Yankees director of catching Tanner Swanson, which could help smooth the difficult midseason transition for any catcher. The only issue, besides the Yankees likely having competition for the pending free agent, is that Jeffers is still working his way back from a broken hamate bone in his left hand. He began a rehab assignment Friday, but will he immediately be the same offensive threat upon his return?

If not Jeffers, the Yankees could look to other veteran catchers like the Rangers' Kyle Higashioka (who obviously spent plenty of time in the organization) or the Astros' Christian Vazquez, neither of whom would be quite the offensive threat as Jeffers, but more of a platoon option.

Reliever

The Yankees get bullpen help at every deadline, including last season, when they remade it on the fly with the additions of David Bednar, Camilo Doval and Jake Bird, all of whom remain on the roster. The problem is that while all three of those arms are still on the roster, only Bednar has been trustworthy this year.

The Yankees were hoping Lagrange could fill one of the spots in the bullpen in the second half, but while making the transition from starter to reliever at Triple-A, he sustained a capsular sprain of the right shoulder and will not throw for approximately six weeks, the team announced Friday. That figures to all but take him out of the picture the rest of this season.

And while some current starters could eventually join the bullpen — if the rotation ever gets fully healthy, that is — the Yankees still need more help beyond Aaron Boone's current circle of trust of Bednar, Fernando Cruz, Brent Headrick and recently Paul Blackburn.

If the Astros actually sell (they have played better of late), Josh Hader would be the top closer on the market. But other relievers that could be of interest include Marlins righty Anthony Bender, Rockies righty Antonio Senzatela and a reunion with Mets righty Luke Weaver.

Starters

A rotation that had been strong and deep earlier this season has hit some bumps of late, both in performance and health, leading to questions of whether the Yankees need help there. If Rodón and Fried return around the deadline, that would lessen the need for a big splash like dealing for Tarik Sukbal, the Tigers lefty who looms as the big prize at this year's trade deadline. Plus, given the amount of areas they already need to address, would the Yankees be willing to give up the amount of talent (potentially both in big leaguers and prospects) it would take to land the back-to-back AL Cy Young winner?

A stopgap pitcher who could fill some innings and potentially help in the bullpen later on — a la another Yankee-turned-Met, Clay Holmes — could make more sense.

Shortstop

This may come down to when the Yankees think George Lombard Jr. can become an option —both in his return from sprained fingers and in his readiness to be a big leaguer. They already believe he is ready defensively, but questions remain about what he can bring offensively at the age of 21. So do they add externally to upgrade their current combination of Anthony Volpe and José Caballero?

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INJURY REPORT

- **Jazz Chisholm Jr.** was back in the lineup Monday after leaving Sunday's game early with right big toe discomfort.
- **Giancarlo Stanton** (right calf strain) remained in New York to continue his rehab, which has not yet advanced to the running stage after his setback last month.

ON DECK

at Rays

Tuesday, 6:40 p.m., YES, WFAN (660 AM, 101.9 FM)

RHP Will Warren

2026 stats:
7-3, 3.73 ERA

Career vs. TBR:
0-1, 3.65 ERA

Last start:
Wed. vs. DET;
5.1 IP, 5 H, 2 ER

PITCH BREAKDOWN

39%	27%	20%
4-Seamer	Sinker	Sweeper

LHP Ian Seymour

2026 stats:
5-1, 4.02 ERA

Career vs. NYY:
1-0, 7.56 ERA

Last start:
Thurs. at KC
6.0 IP, 3 H, 1 ER

PITCH BREAKDOWN

32%	24%	24%
Changeup	Sweeper	Sweeper

UP NEXT

WEDNESDAY: at Rays,
6:40 p.m., Prime Vid., WFAN
RHP Gerrit Cole vs.
LHP Shane McLanahan

THURSDAY: at Rays,
1:10 p.m., YES, WFAN
TBD vs.
RHP Drew Rasmussen

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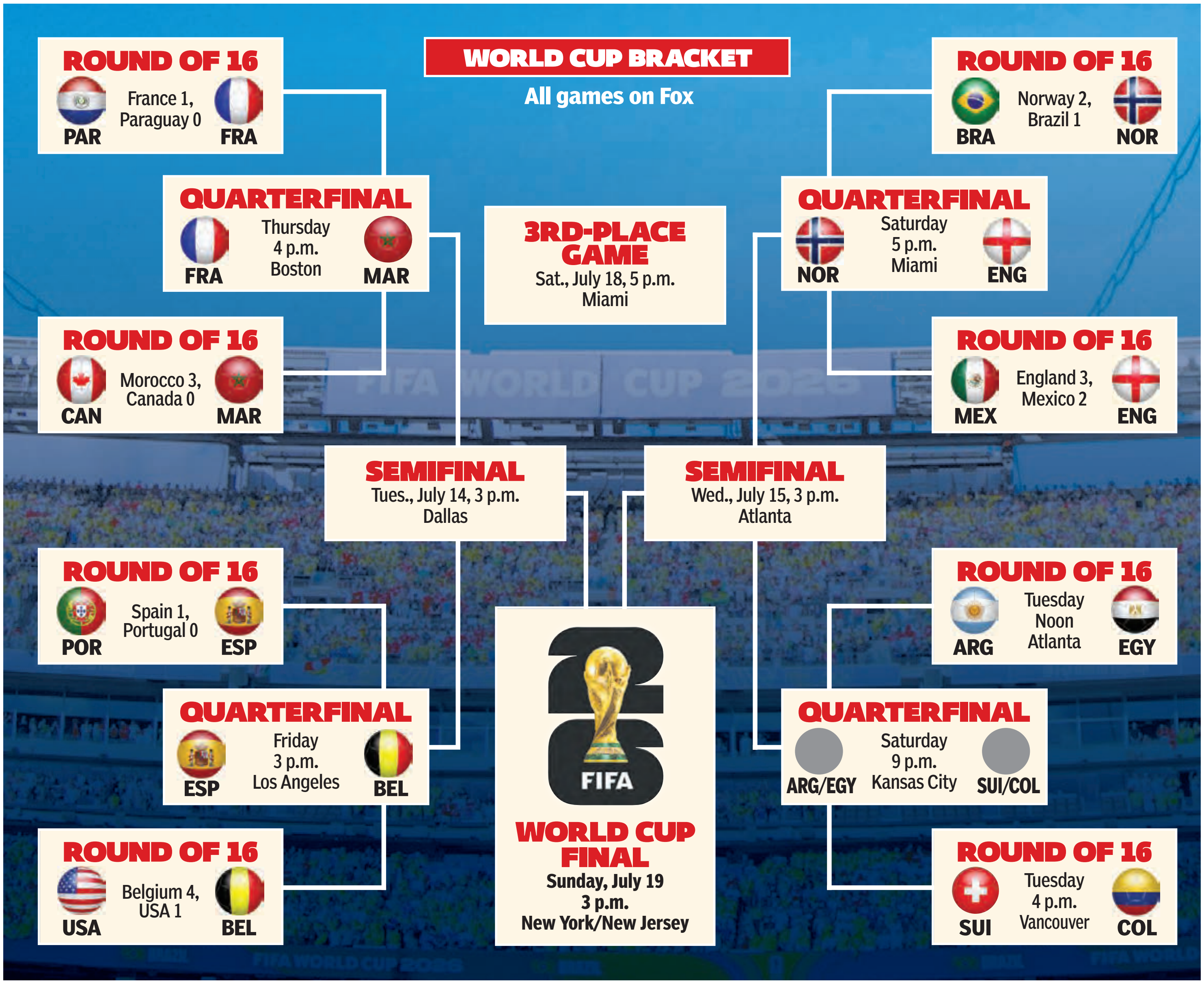

WORLD CUP BRACKET

All games on Fox

ROUND OF 16
PAR France 1, Paraguay 0 FRA

QUARTERFINAL
FRA Thursday 4 p.m. Boston MAR

ROUND OF 16
CAN Morocco 3, Canada 0 MAR

SEMIFINAL
Tues., July 14, 3 p.m.
Dallas

ROUND OF 16
POR Spain 1, Portugal 0 ESP

QUARTERFINAL
ESP Friday 3 p.m. Los Angeles BEL

ROUND OF 16
USA Belgium 4, USA 1 BEL

3RD-PLACE GAME
Sat., July 18, 5 p.m.
Miami

WORLD CUP FINAL
Sunday, July 19
3 p.m.
New York/New Jersey

ROUND OF 16
BRA Norway 2, Brazil 1 NOR

QUARTERFINAL
NOR Saturday 5 p.m. Miami ENG

ROUND OF 16
MEX England 3, Mexico 2 ENG

SEMIFINAL
Wed., July 15, 3 p.m.
Atlanta

ROUND OF 16
ARG Tuesday Noon Atlanta EGY

QUARTERFINAL
ARG/EGY Saturday 9 p.m. Kansas City SUI/COL

ROUND OF 16
SUI Tuesday 4 p.m. Vancouver COL

RAISING SPAIN

WC juggernaut edges past Portugal with winning goal in stoppage time

By SCHUYLER DIXON

SPAIN	**1**	**World Cup Round of 16**
PORTUGAL	**0**	

ARLINGTON, Texas — Mikel Merino was still on the bench in the final minutes of regulation, with Spain coach Luis de la Fuente worried about hanging on to his substitutes as long as possible because of looming extra time.

The Arsenal forward made all that fretting moot.

Merino scored in the first minute of second-half stoppage time, and Spain beat Portugal 1-0 on Monday to end the World Cup career of superstar Cristiano Ronaldo.

Merino had just been knocked down, and a foul was called. While Portugal's Bernardo Silva argued, Merino played the ball back in, ran toward the goal and easily beat goalkeeper Diogo Costa after a series of passes capped by Ferran Torres' nifty ball through the middle.

"He's one of the best in his position worldwide, and he has given us a fantastic result and a fantastic goal," de la Fuente said via translator.

Spain advanced to the quarterfinals for the first time since winning its only World Cup title in 2010. La Roja will play either the United States or Belgium on Friday in Inglewood, California.

Ronaldo was trying to get Portugal to the quarterfinals in a second consecutive tournament for the first time. Instead, the career on soccer's biggest stage is over for the all-time leader in international goals (146) and appearances (233).

Merino didn't enter until the 85th minute, and his heads-up play showed some of the versatility that helped Arsenal win its first Premier League title in more than 20 years this spring.

The World Cup was in doubt for Merino, who turned 30 during the tournament, after right foot surgery cut short his Arsenal season.

In the biggest moment of the year for Spain, there he was with fresh legs, finishing with his left foot into the left corner of the net. After emerging from a group hug with his teammates, Merino made a circle around the flag in a corner before letting out a guttural scream while clenching both fists.

That's how his father, Miguel Merino, celebrated more than three decades ago during his club career in Spain.

This was Mikel Merino's first World Cup goal, and 11th for the national team.

"What better way to celebrate," Merino said.

— AP

Pochettino not ready to commit to future

By ETHAN SEARS

SEATTLE — The U.S. men's national team is out of the World Cup, and whether Mauricio Pochettino's tenure as manager is over was a question the Argentine was unwilling to fully answer Monday night.

"In the next weeks, we can start to talk if the federation wants to talk," Pochettino said following the 4-1 defeat to Belgium. "Right now, it's about resting a little bit, to think, to have conversations with the federation to see what the decision is. I'm so happy. We've built a very good relationship, now is not a moment to talk about [my future]."

U.S. Soccer reportedly presented Pochettino with a contract offer through the 2030 World Cup before this World Cup started.

Whether Pochettino — who's openly expressed that he'd like to return to manage in the English Premier League — is interested in doing so is another matter.

He seemed to take to America's culture during his time here and genuinely to enjoy coaching at the World Cup. A full four-year cycle that includes qualifying, though, is a lot different from what he just did. Pochettino was the coach for only 18 months, and the U.S. automatically qualified for this World Cup as the host nation.

The idea of coaching a host nation, clearly, was part of the allure for Pochettino.

Perhaps the 2028 Copa America, which is likely to be held in the U.S., will be part of the carrot to come back, as well as the fact that many of the same players Pochettino has built relationships with will play huge roles at the 2030 World Cup, which is to be played largely on the Iberian peninsula and in Morocco.

Another factor is that most European club jobs are filled at this point in the cycle. AC Milan, a club that seemed to have some interest in Pochettino, filled its managerial role with Ruben Amorim.

Pochettino, who lived mostly in Barcelona and London during his time managing the U.S., would also need to consider whether he wants to move stateside. With a shiny new facility open in Fayetteville, Ga., the next USMNT manager could work out of the Atlanta suburb.

Balogun fails to spark U.S. after suspension drama

By ETHAN SEARS

SEATTLE — After all that, Folarin Balogun's impact on the U.S. men's national team's Round of 16 loss to Belgium amounted to a whimper.

The man at the center of a global news cycle over the last 36 hours was, like the rest of his teammates, left to answer for a brutal 4-1 defeat to Belgium with a hushed voice full of regret. The global outrage that followed the suspension of his red card suspension will rescind into the same nebulous space as Balogun's one-match ban itself: still technically there, but largely irrelevant.

"I accepted the decision when I was given the red card. Then I also accepted the decision when I could play," Balogun said of the 36-hour saga that engulfed the World Cup. "There's not much else I can really say on the matter. I think with all that being said, Belgium were the better team today."

Balogun later added that he had no involvement in the process behind the scenes, though he avoided saying he was ignorant of it entirely.

Though he made his usual promising runs in behind, the service simply wasn't there to create the chances Balogun has been at the center of throughout the World Cup. Aside from an 83rd-minute shot parried away by Thibaut Courtois, you wouldn't have noticed Balogun for much of the evening.

After the match ended, he made a point to go over to Belgium manager Rudi Garcia, who had compared the decision to April Fools' Day on Sunday.

"To be honest, I just congratulated Belgium," Balogun said. "This is a game. There's winners and losers. Similar to when I was given the red card, you have to handle it the right way."

Garcia, at his press conference, said he told Balogun that the situation was "not his fault."

"He said he hopes this situation won't overshadow the fantastic World Cup I've had," Balogun said. "He just wanted to encourage me to be positive. To be proud of what I've been able to accomplish this tournament."

With time, Balogun will be able to do that. On Monday night, he seemed to still be coming to grips with the moment.

"The feeling of disappointment is very difficult to put into words," Balogun said. "I think for me, personally, also, the situation I've been involved in is also gonna present challenges. So it's just important for me to be able to gather my thoughts and then at the right time, I'm sure I'll be able to speak on the topic."

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ALL FOR NAUGHT: Folarin Balogun reacts during a quiet performance against Belgium on Monday that failed to match the massive pre-match drama around his suspension being lifted. Getty Images

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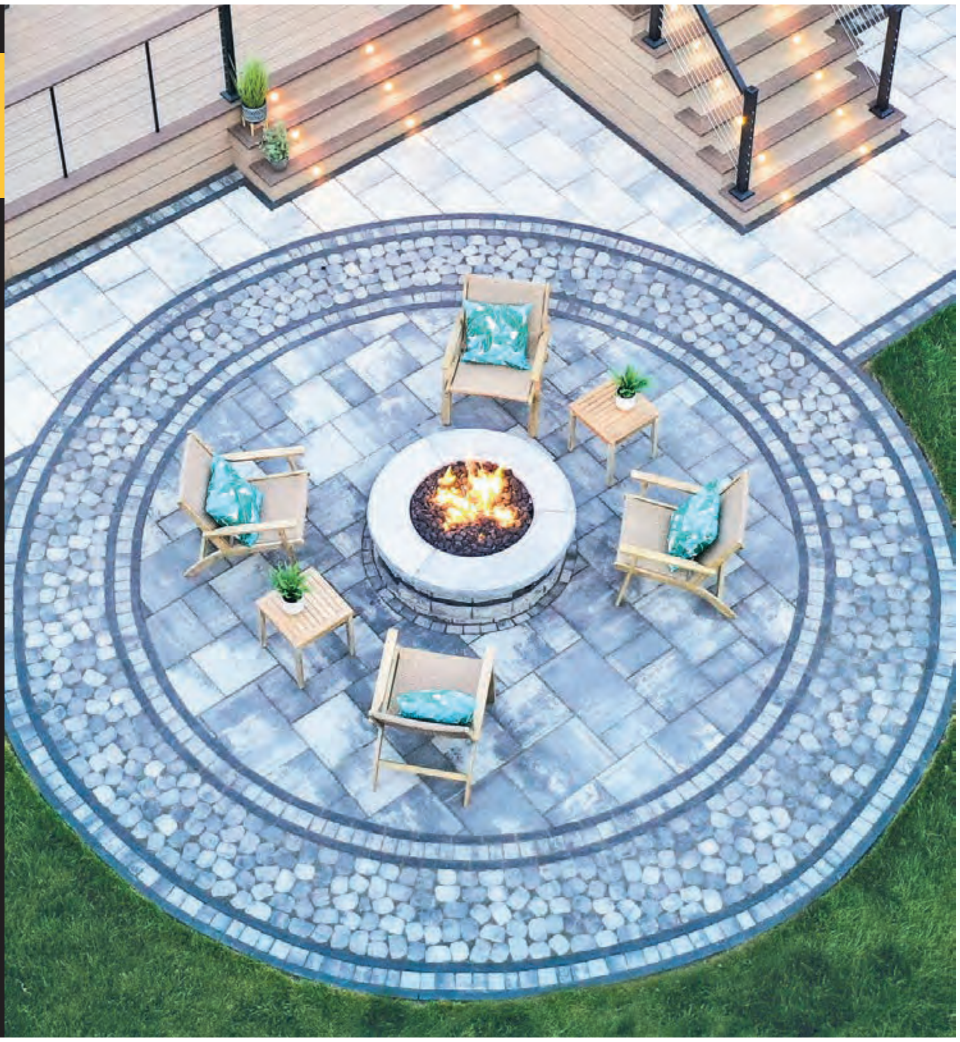

USA VS. BELGIUM
SEATTLE, WA
6 JULY 2026
USA
10

AMERICAN SIGH

U.S. goes out with whimper vs. Belgium in worst performance of tournament

Mark Cannizzaro

SEATTLE — What a buzzkill.

Thud.

Deafening silence.

The end.

The World Cup dreams of the USMNT ended so swiftly Monday night in the form of a dispiriting 4-1 loss to Belgium in the Round of 16 before a sold-out and stunned Lumen Field crowd that it left you to forget all the good that had taken place for the previous month.

What feels worse is how much this eerily resembled World Cup losses of yesteryear when the USMNT looked completely outclassed by a country with far superior players.

And to think ... entering this match there were visions of actually hoisting the World Cup dancing in the heads of this USMNT group and its supporters.

As unrealistic as the dream may have seemed — to win it all — U.S. coach Mauricio Pochettino set that mantra for his side from the beginning of this tournament.

The three wins in four matches, easily winning Group D and dominating Bosnia-Herzegovina in the Round of 32, did nothing but build that belief that it was possible.

And then this happened: a setback of gigantic proportions.

"We were not the same team that showed quality throughout the tournament," Pochettino said after the match. "We didn't show our real quality as a team. I don't think we ever connected with the flow of the game. We were not at our level.

"We were not good enough. Belgium were better than us, and that's it. It's very clear."

The ragged U.S. performance left you wondering where it all went for the U.S.

Where was the confidence and swagger that had become a hallmark of this tournament for the Americans?

Where was the swarming aggressiveness the U.S. showed in scoring the first goal in its first four World Cup matches?

And where was the defense? My goodness, the defense.

The defense that stood so strong while deftly surviving Bosnia with 10 men for the final 35 minutes with striker Folarin Balogun having been sent off with the red card heard 'round the world yielded all four goals on rudimentary breakdowns.

The U.S. back line looked lost all night. It looked as if the U.S. defenders had practiced together for the first time this week.

"To be honest, I'm not really analyzing the game at the minute," defender and team captain Tim Ream said afterward, seemingly still stunned. "Obviously, they're a good side. I don't have a whole lot of answers for any tactical analysis at the minute."

Everything was missing for the Americans on this night, everything they'd done so well for the balance of this World Cup was absent for the most important 90 minutes of their soccer lives.

Balogun, who'd been controversially reinstated by FIFA on Sunday to play the match?

He never came truly close to scoring after he'd scored in each of the three matches he'd played entering the night.

In the end, all of the hand-wringing, all the debate over who was wronged, Belgium's protests and the political polarization of President Donald Trump's overstated role in influencing FIFA's reinstatement of Balogun mattered little.

Pochettino was adamant that there was no distraction from the Balogun situation and said there would be "no excuses."

Midfielder Tyler Adams said the loss "stings."

"I don't like to be eliminated from anything," he said. "Tonight was not a good performance. It's not what we look to achieve. This was a moment to have the opportunity to advance and really try and do something special. And we fell short."

The shock on this night for the U.S. started early, in the ninth minute, when Belgium striker Charles De Ketelaere scored what had to be the easiest goal of his life for a 1-0 lead — a one-timer into the back of the net with Ream, Antonee Robinson and Weston McKennie asleep on their feet.

The U.S. never recovered from the early shock. Maybe the magnitude of the moment, with a chance to reach a World Cup quarterfinal for the first time since 2002 and

FEEL YOUR PAIN: Christian Pulisic lays on the field in pain after hurting his foot, trying to get the United States back in a game they were chasing from the start. Meanwhile, fans from Seattle to Kansas City (below) to New York felt the pain of the USMNT's crashing out of their home World Cup with a 4-1 loss to Belgium that was the worst of the tournament. AP; Imagn Images

USA
STARS & STRIPES

the second time ever, was finally too much for the American side.

There was a brief spasm of life for the U.S. — on another set-piece goal from Malik Tillman.

Suddenly, the game was tied 1-1 in the 31st minute and the stadium was alive. The euphoria, however, was terribly short-lived. It lasted 61 seconds to be exact.

That's when Belgium went up 2-1 on another De Ketelaere goal as he split Ream and Robinson to win the header that keeper Matt Freese had no chance to save.

Pochettino was so disgusted, he wildly kicked a tray of water bottles in front of the bench. It was the most infuriated Pochettino has looked in this entire World Cup.

Little did Pochettino know, but it was about to get worse, with Belgium scoring two more goals on defensive breakdowns.

The U.S. picked the worst time to deliver its worst performance.

"It was a very bad day," Pochettino said. "Sometimes this type of thing happens, but in a tournament like a World Cup, when that happens you don't get another chance. There's no net. When that happens in the knockout stage, you know you're out and you need to go home."

And so begins an agonizing four-year wait for the next World Cup before the USMNT has a chance to prove that this wasn't the colossal setback it appeared to be.

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Star Pulisic looks like shadow of self before leaving hurt

By MICHAEL DUARTE

SEATTLE — In the first half of the United States' opening match against Paraguay, Christian Pulisic looked every bit like the best player on the pitch. Against Belgium on Monday night in Seattle, the weight of a nation's expectations finally looked too heavy to bear.

The U.S. needed their star to produce another signature World Cup moment. Instead, the sellout crowd at Lumen Field watched their brightest star endure perhaps the most difficult 59 minutes of his international career before limping off the field in visible pain.

From the opening whistle, Belgium looked like the better side, and their strategy of not allowing Pulisic to breathe, let alone operate in space, was executed to perfection.

Every touch came with immediate pressure. Every turn was met by a Belgium player. The Red Devils' experienced defenders leaned on him physically, closed every passing lane and refused to let him dictate the rhythm that had made him so successful against Paraguay, Turkey and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

For perhaps the first time all summer, Pulisic looked nervous, rushed and frankly, poor.

Rather than slowing the game and waiting for teammates to make their runs, he forced passes that weren't there. He repeatedly tried to dribble through traffic instead of around it. By halftime, he had surrendered possession 11 times — more than any player on the field — a staggering number for the player entrusted with orchestrating nearly every meaningful American attack.

It wasn't for a lack of effort. If anything, Pulisic appeared desperate to rescue the evening himself.

Early in the second half, he finally found a sliver of daylight and burst toward the Belgian penalty area. It looked for an instant like the opening the U.S. had been searching for. Then everything unraveled.

As Pulisic swung his right foot to shoot, his boot clipped the foot of a Belgian defender. He crumpled immediately, grabbing at his right foot. The fans thought it was a foul just outside the penalty box. When the referee didn't blow the whistle for a foul, they booed loudly. The replays showed it was the right decision. Pulisic slowly rose to his feet with an unmistakable limp.

TOUGH TO WATCH: Christian Pulisic covers his face on the bench after being forced off injured in the 59th minute of the USMNT's loss in the Round of 16 on Monday. Fox Sports

"I just totally twisted my ankle in that one play," Pulisic said. "It was just an unfortunate way to finish."

The sequence proved devastating.

Moments later, Belgium capitalized on a costly defensive breakdown, punishing a mistake by goalkeeper Matt Freese to seize the lead. Seconds after the restart, U.S. manager Mauricio Pochettino made the difficult decision, replacing Pulisic with Sebastian Berhalter in the 59th minute.

Pulisic's reaction said everything.

He dropped to the bench in frustration and disbelief as trainers examined his right foot. Television cameras caught it all as he stared blankly towards the pitch, at times consoled by his teammates. He was no longer able to help them chase a match that was slipping away.

"It sucks," Pulisic said of what was going through his mind when he exited the game. "An earlier injury and now another. It just sucked. It was really tough. It was difficult for me to deal with it. But we have a great team and they should be really proud."

If this proves to be Pulisic's final memory of the 2026 FIFA World Cup, it will stand in sharp contrast to everything that came before it.

"I thought my level was high at times, but it's disappointing overall," said Pulisic, reflecting on his World Cup overall. "I didn't quite have the moments I was hoping to have and I really want to help push us to get over this next step and beat a really good team. I'm disappointed, but I'll be back and we're going to figure it out."

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THE LAST OF U.S.

USMNT outclassed by Belgium as World Cup run ends in rout

By ETHAN SEARS

SEATTLE — Walking around Monday afternoon, it felt like a holiday. The whole city of Seattle seemed to be on pause, everyone was wearing gear, nobody was at work.

It felt like the sort of grand occasion the sport of soccer has never been able to wring out of America had finally arrived.

And then that occasion swallowed the U.S. men's national team whole.

After captivating the country for the better part of a month, the Americans crashed out of the World Cup on Monday night, losing to Belgium 4-1 to fall at the same Round of 16 hurdle that it hasn't gotten past since 2002.

BELGIUM	**4**	**Round of 16**
USA	**1**	

"It was unlike any of the other performances we've had this summer, to be honest," Jedi Robinson said. "... We didn't win any individual duels, really. We looked like we lacked energy. Didn't flow as we have been. Just disappointing to lose a game not in the manner of how we represented ourselves the rest of the tournament."

This team — so clearly the most talented the U.S. has ever had, coached by a giant of the sport in Mauricio Pochettino — couldn't get any further than its predecessors.

"We don't need to find another excuse," Pochettino said. "I think we were not good enough. It wasn't our day."

Folarin Balogun, whose red card suspension was shockingly suspended Sunday, engulfing the World Cup in controversy, couldn't save the USMNT. Nothing could.

"Was anyone a major presence on the field today?" Tyler Adams asked, rhetorically. Not at all.

Not when it looked so nervous, so shaky, so ill-prepared for such a big moment. Not when Sergiño Dest and Alex Freeman couldn't seem to come up with a clean touch, and not when their teammates weren't much better.

The Americans were beyond lucky to enter halftime down just 2-1, having been thoroughly outclassed through the first 45 minutes. They failed to take advantage.

Though the introduction of Gio Reyna for Dest at halftime seemed to briefly settle the USMNT, it didn't last. Matt Freese had a shocking moment after 57 minutes, taking an extra touch on the ball outside of the area only for Charles De Ketelaere to take the ball off him. He gave it to Hans Vanaken who promptly skipped the ball past Tim Ream and into the back of the net.

LIBERTY FELL: A fan reacts in the stands during the United States' Round of 16 loss to Belgium on Monday night. Getty Images

Christian Pulisic, who exited after twisting his knee and ankle in the 58th minute, was left to lament an injury-marred World Cup that, after an electric first 45 minutes against Paraguay, never regained momentum.

"I didn't quite have the moments I was hoping to and to try to help us to really push and get over this next step of beating a really good team," Pulisic said. "So I'm disappointed with myself of course."

The USMNT's lack of depth — quietly a major weakness throughout the tournament — was exposed as soon as Pochettino had to change the shape of the game. Reyna, Sebastian Berhalter and Ricardo Pepi came on; none made a major impact. Pochettino didn't use his two remaining subs, a concession unto itself about the lack of depth on his squad.

The mere fact of Balogun's inclusion will mean that outside the U.S., their loss will be seen as karmic justice. Even worse is that Balogun had no discernible impact on the game, though that was in part because the service to him was so poor.

Earlier in the game, things threatened to get out of hand quickly. Freese was forced into a diving save just 45 seconds into the match, and the U.S. didn't get better from there. It took just nine minutes for De Ketelaere to put Belgium into the lead after Freeman's clearing header went nowhere. Dest failed to stop Nicholas Raskin from winning the ball back and the midfielder played it across to De Ketalaere.

Malik Tillman's free kick goal after 31 minutes was the USMNT's first shot of the game, and seemed a lifeline.

It took all of 61 seconds for the USMNT to make a mess of it, as De Ketalaere rose above Tim Ream and Robinson to head in Leandro Trossard's cross for a 2-1 Belgium lead 33 minutes in.

After the way the USMNT played for their first four games of this tournament, looking so confident and so ready for their moment in the spotlight, this was a shocking failure.

"Belgium deserved to win the game," Adams said. "Clearly."

Successful as their campaign had been until now, it's hard to shake the feeling that none of it matters now.

This once-in-a-lifetime opportunity is over, and for all the potential they showed, the U.S. couldn't take advantage.

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SLAYED BY THE BEL': Matt Freese reacts after Belgium's third goal, scored by Hans Vanaken (left), during the United States' 4-1 loss to Belgium. Getty Images

MOURN IN THE USA: Chris Richards (left) and Tim Ream (right) react as Charles De Ketelaere celebrates his second goal of Belgium's 4-1 win over the United States. Imagn Images

Americans buckle under 'D' pressure

By MICHAEL DUARTE

SEATTLE — The United States men's national team finally showed the cracks along the fault lines that had been there from the beginning.

Their vulnerable defense that bent through friendlies, shined and survived in the group stage, and escaped against Bosnia and Herzegovina, finally fractured Monday night.

"Today wasn't a good day," midfielder Tyler Adams said. "There was a lot of things we could have done better. I think when you concede goals that easily against a team of that quality, you're going to lose. This was an opportunity to advance and try and do something special and we fell short."

Belgium found every weakness, pulled every loose thread and watched the entire sweater unravel in a devastating 4-1 Round of 16 victory that sent the Americans crashing out of the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

The Red Devils didn't overwhelm the U.S. with dazzling individual brilliance. They dissected the defense with skill, quality and precision. Quick one-touch passing repeatedly pulled defenders out of position before Belgium attacked the channels near the edge of the penalty area. Once there, the final pass almost always found an American defender a step late, leaving their man unmarked over and over again.

And those mistakes became the difference between belief and elimination.

"We were so good defensively in this whole tournament, but today we gave up all those easy opportunities," defender Alex Freeman said. "We can't do that. We will look back on this game and realize those are the things we have to do better. We need to be more consistent. At the end of the day, that's what we need to work on."

Belgium's opening goal was a clinic — for the wrong team. Tim Ream and Antonee Robinson both left Charles De Ketelaere unmarked and he stood completely alone in front of the goal before calmly finishing an easy chance in the ninth minute.

The second goal looked painfully like the first. Again Belgium worked the ball wide. Again the cross arrived untouched. Again De Ketelaere slipped between Robinson and Ream, beating both to the delivery before powering a header into the net. It was less an isolated mistake than a recurring symptom of a defensive unit that never consistently communicated or recovered throughout the tournament.

"To be honest, I'm not really able to analyze the game at this moment," Ream said. "They're a good side. They tilted the ball in their favor. I don't have a whole lot of answers for you."

Then came the sequence that will replay in American soccer nightmares for years to come.

In the 57th minute, goalkeeper Matt Freese sprinted well outside his penalty area to meet a hopeful long ball, forced to try to control it with his chest. As he prepared to clear, his foot got caught in the turf. He swung clean through nothing but Seattle air.

Hans Vanaken hardly needed an invitation. The loose ball rolled toward him and he calmly and cleanly kicked it toward the open net while Ream desperately scrambled back to try to stop it. The veteran defender and captain probably could have kicked it out of play, but instead he twisted awkwardly and missed. The inevitable occurred. Vanaken's ball found the vacant goal and with it went any realistic hope of an American comeback.

"That was an error of judgment on my part," Freese said of his mistake. "It's part of the position. I thought the guys in front of me did everything they could today to get the win. I'm so proud of them. I wish that moment was different and I wish the result was different. I'm obviously disappointed."

It was the defining image of a defense that never looked settled when the pressure reached its highest point.

Belgium added another goal before the final whistle, turning a competitive knockout match into a harsh indictment of the Americans' biggest weakness.

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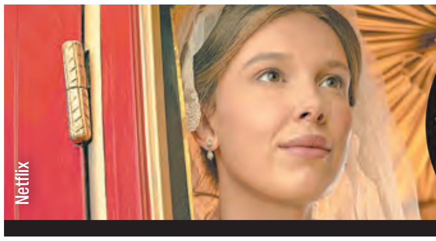
STREAM IT OR SKIP IT

"Enola Holmes 3" (Netflix) is just fine. The charm of the first two films has mostly worn off, possibly because they were enjoyable in the moment, but ultimately not at all memorable, a fact exemplified by **Millie Bobby Brown**'s (below) upbeat-yet-lightweight performances. **OUR CALL: SKIP IT**

WHAT TO WATCH

Graham Yost's hit dystopian drama **"Silo"** — based on Hugh Howey's bestselling book trilogy — is back for its highly-anticipated third season on Apple TV. And dare we say, this is its best season yet. Three seasons deep, "Silo" remains a captivating sci-fi marvel that stresses the importance of pursuing truth. In today's crowded TV landscape it offers reliably stellar performances, gripping writing, and a singular viewing experience.



Netflix

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DECIDER

WHAT TO WATCH. WHEREVER YOU WATCH

A 'DASH' OF DRAMA

Ava Dash says 'there's so much tea' to come in 'Next Gen NYC' Season 2

Jacquelyn Kozak

Above: Ava Dash.
Below left: Ava Dash and Gia Giudice on "Next Gen NYC."
Below: Charlie Zakkour, Shai Fruchter, and Dash.

By SAMANTHA NUNGESSER AND MACKENZIE ROBBINS

Will Charlie Zakkour become the next celebrity to fall victim to a Damon Dash diss track? If he keeps up his inappropriate comments about the music mogul's daughter, Ava Dash, it very well could happen.

Ava, who stars alongside the crypto trader in Bravo's **"Next Gen NYC,"** stopped by DECIDER's studio last week to dish on the hit show's sophomore season. While discussing her friendship status with Zakkour in the Season 2 premiere episode, the budding model said his "disrespectful" comments about her body in the first season, which aired last summer, left her feeling uncomfortable, particularly when her dad watched the show back.

"Oh, he was not a fan," Ava said of Damon's reaction to Zakkour's crass remarks. "He did have a convo with Charlie where he was like, 'No more of that.'"

Despite Zakkour's bad-boy ways and seamless ability to wind up in drama, Ava said he did a better job at respecting her boundaries this season. "If you give him a boundary, he'll stay within it. Or at least that's my experience with him," she said. "He's definitely cooled out a lot."

DECIDER: Ava, we're so excited to talk to you all about "Next Gen NYC" Season 2. Last season, your castmates were a bit critical of you being absent. Will we see more of you this season?

AVA DASH: Yes, you'll definitely see a lot more of me this season. I think I was a little bit scared last season to just open up and be vulnerable. That was scary to me, but this season I've really tried my best to open up and be there more. I think you guys will really enjoy it, or I hope you do.

We appreciated your honesty when it came to the eviction notice. How did that all unfold? And were you planning to be so upfront about it on the show?

Honestly, I didn't really have a plan with how I was going to address it. I was just doing my confessionals and producers asked me about it, so I was like, "You know what? I guess this is my time." I'm not usually someone that will comment on a headline, especially if it's about my family or something that has to do with my family. I just let it kind of ride out. But I just figured I have this platform and people are curious and they want me to open up, so I'm gonna, and hopefully they respond well to it. And so far they have, so I'm glad that I was honest about it. My dad knew it was coming. If your landlord's not getting the total amount of rent, you might get a notice.

You said you think the rumors that come out about you and your family are funny. What's the craziest false rumor you've ever read or heard?

There are so many things. I don't even know. Every day, there's just always something, especially with my dad. I feel like my dad likes to kind of troll online, and people take it seriously a lot. And so it's funny to see how serious people take him when he's just joking. Like, right now he has a viral song, a diss track, out. And I think people are really taking it too seriously when in reality he's like at home laughing. He just wants to have a good time.

What else can you tease about this season?

There's so much that happens this season. We go to BravoCon, we go skiing. I feel like when we go on trips, like, you bond a lot with the people. So I feel like there's just so many silly moments coming up that I'm just really excited to watch back and see it from other people's perspectives. There's so much tea that happens. A lot of romantic tea ends up happening this season, so I'm curious and I can't wait to watch it. I'm so excited for everyone to see.

Word on the street is you've been hanging out with Kyle Cooke. Is there anything you can say about that?

Oh. We have randomly become in the same friend group and we have been hanging out a lot in group settings. Honestly, I think he's so much fun, he always takes the aux cord, and he's always deejaying, and he kills it. We just always have the best time. Yeah, it's a lot of fun.

Prime Video

TRENDING NOW

Jaalen Best (left) is tranforming into Muhammad Ali in Prime Video's **"The Greatest."** According to the streamer, the series, which premieres on Wednesday, Nov. 4, "is an intimate exploration of the incomparable life of the boxing champion, humanitarian and global icon."

SUMMER
SPARKS

WHAT'S NEW

ON PRIME VIDEO
"**The Ghost in the Shell**," a new anime adaptation.

ON THE ROKU CHANNEL
"**Summer Sparks**," led by **Kathryn Davis** and **Jesse Metcalfe** (left).

Best Bets

What's on Tonight

ROMANCE

There's Something About Mary: 3:25 p.m. on FREFRM. Cameron Diaz, Matt Dillon. A man gets a chance to meet up with his dream girl from high school.

DRAMA

Saving Private Ryan: 7 p.m. on AMC. Tom Hanks, Matt Damon. A group of U.S. soldiers go behind enemy lines to retrieve a paratrooper.

COMEDY

School of Rock: 10:30 p.m. on PARMT. Jack Black, Joan Cusack. After being kicked out of his rock band, Dewey becomes a substitute teacher at a private school.

Tuesday July 7, 2026

SP = Spectrum, C = Cablevision, F = FiOS   Movies 🟥   Sports 🟩   New 🟨

Evening	SP	C	F	6:30pm	7:00pm	7:30pm	8:00pm	8:30pm	9:00pm	9:30pm	10:00pm	10:30pm	11:00pm	11:30pm
2 WCBS	2	2	2	CBS Evening News	Inside Edition	Entertainment Tonight	NCIS: Now and Then (R)		NCIS: Origins: Who's Gonna Drive You Home? (R)		NCIS: Sydney: Berthed (R)		CBS News 11pm	(11:35) Comics
4 WNBC	4	4	4	NBC Nightly News	News 4 New York at 7	Access Hollywood	America's Got Talent: Auditions 5				Password: Sarsaparilla	Password	News 4 New York at 11	(11:35) Tonight Show
5 WNYW	5	5	5	The 6 O'Clock News	Extra	TMZ	MasterChef: Game Day Gourmet (R)		MasterChef: World Cup Cookoff (R)		The 10 O'Clock News		Good Night New York	Feud Favorites (R)
7 WABC	7	7	7	ABC World News	Jeopardy!	Wheel of Fortune (R)	RJ Decker: Twenty Pounds of Clem in (R)		Will Trent: Studio 4B (R)		Will Trent: The Man From Nowhere (R)		News	(11:35) Kimmel Live
9 WWOR	9	9	9	Family Feud (R)	Family Feud (R)	Family Feud (R)	The News on My 9		Chicago P.D.: Fork in the Road (R)		Family Feud (R)	Family Feud (R)	Chicago P.D.: Army of One (R)	
11 WPIX	11	11	11	(6:00) PIX11 News at 6	Seinfeld: Heart Attack	The Big Bang Theory	WWE NXT Live.				PIX11 News at Ten		New York Nightcap	Seinfeld: The Nap
13 WNET	13	13	13	BBC News America	The PBS News Hour		Finding Your Roots: Family: Lost and Found (R)		Breaking the Deadlock: How to Fix An Election (R)		Diana's Decades: 1970s		Amanpour and Company	
21 WLIW	21	21	21	(6:00) News	My Life	(7:45) Father Brown		Murder Mysteries		Silent Witness		America	BBC News	The Day
25 WNYE	25	22	25	The Chavis	County	Voces NYC	Walkin NYC	Discovery	Never Knew	Future	New York	Secrets NY	Lessons of Basketball	
31 WPXN	31	3	531	(6:00) Fire	Chicago Fire: Blasting Off		Chicago Fire		Chicago Fire		Chicago Fire		Chicago Fire: A Dark Day	
41 WXTV	41	6	41	N Univisi	La rosa de Guadalupe		Tan Cerca de Ti, Nace el		Guardián de mi Vida		Hermanas Un Amo		Noticias	N Univisio
47 WNJU	47	16	12	El Mundial	Operación Triunfo				El Señor de los Cielos		El Turco: Soldado turco		Noticias (R)	Noticias
55 WLNY	55	10	10	Perfect (R)	Last Man	Last Man	News 8pm		48 Hours: Breaking Point		Judge Judy	Judge Judy	Neighbor.	Neighbor.
A&E	46	46	181	Neighbor	Neighbor	Neighbor	Neighbor	Neighbor	Neighbor	Neighbor	Squatters	Squatters	Squatters	Squatters
AMC	54	43	231	Martian	Saving Private Ryan (1998, Drama) Tom Hanks. R ★★★★								Lone Survivor (2014) ★★★	
BBCAM	71	101	189	A Knight's Tale (2001) ★★★		The Patriot (2000, Drama) Mel Gibson. R ★★½							Law & Order	
BET	37	54	270	(6:00) Feud	Celebrity Family Feud		Celebrity Family Feud		Ms. Pat	Comic View	Lot Patrol	Martin	Martin	Martin
BRAVO	18	44	185	Housewives	In The City: Get Married		In The City: Caught in the Crossfire			In The City: In Crossfire		Next Gen NYC (R)		Housewives
CNBC	15	24	102	Money	Shark Tank		Shark Tank		Shark Tank		Shark Tank		Shark Tank (R)	
CNN	78	25	100	(6:00) Lead	Erin Burnett OutFront		Anderson Cooper 360°		The Source with Kaitlan		CNN NewsNight		Laura Coates Live	
COMEDY	45	50	190	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy	Daily Show	Family Guy
DISC	66	27	120	Homestead	Homestead Rescue (R)		Homestead Rescue: Revenge of the Treehouse (R)				Homestead Rescue: Blistered on the Bayou (R)			
DISNEY	49	31	250	Big City	Big City	Big City	Turning Red (2022) Rosalie Chiang. ★★★			Phineas	(10:15) Kiff: Silly Moods		Miraculous	Miraculous
E!	24	51	196	Mother (R)	Mother (R)	Mother (R)	Mother (R)	Mother (R)	Mother (R)	Mother (R)	Mother (R)	Mother (R)	Mother (R)	Mother (R)
ESPN	28	36	70	Sports	Sports	Countdown	WNBA Basketball: Dallas Wings at New York Liberty.				NBA Summer League Basketball: Teams TBA Live.			
ESPN2	29	35	74	Podcast	Athletes Unlimited Softball: Teams TBA Live.				ESPN FC		ESPN Original		NFL Live	
FBN	43	106	117	Bottom	Kudlow (R)		Kelsey Grammer (R)		Kelsey Grammer (R)		Kelsey Grammer (R)		Kelsey Grammer (R)	
FNC	44	26	118	Spc. Rpt.	The Ingraham Angle		Jesse Watters Primetime		Hannity				Fox News @ Night	
FOOD	50	97	164	Chopped	Chopped: African Soul		Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby
FREE	38	49	199	The Other Woman (2014, Comedy) Cameron Diaz.				The Devil Wears Prada (2006, Comedy) Meryl Streep. PG-13 ★★★					The 700 Club (R)	
FS1	400	99	83	Harvick's	2026 FIFA World Cup Taped.				2026 FIFA World Cup Taped.				FIFA World Cup Replay.	
FX	10	40	53	(5:00) Avengers: Age of Ultron (2015)			Captain America: Civil War (2016, Action) Chris Evans. PG-13 ★★★							Me, Myself
HALL		191	240	(6:00) Return to Christmas Creek (2018)			Melt My Heart This Christmas (2025)				Golden	Golden	Golden	Golden
HGTV	64	98	165	Love It	Love It or List It		Love It or List It		Castle Impossible		Hunters	Australia	Australia	Hunters
HIST	40	47	128	The Secret	The Secret (R)		The Secret: High Voltage		The Secret of Skinwalker		The Secret	(10:32) Proof Is Out		Proof Out
ID	23	171	123	Psychopath	Psychopath	Psychopath	48 Hours on ID		Surviving a Serial Killer		Bodies in the Water		Bodies in the Water	
LIFE	62	45	140	Castle	Castle: Chill Goes		Castle: Always Buy Retail		Castle: Heart Stops		(10:03) Castle: Ghosts		(11:03) Castle: Girl Lost	
MeTV	33	33	3	M*A*S*H	M*A*S*H	M*A*S*H	Andy	Andy	Loves Ray.	Loves Ray.	Golden	Golden	Burnett	P. Mason
MSG	27	87	78	(5:00) NHL	NHL Hockey				Club 30		NHL Hockey			
MSG Plus	48	88	80	(6:00) To Be Announced: Program information is currently unavailable.										
MSNOW	14	23	103	Ari Melber	The Weeknight		All in with Chris Hayes		The Briefing Jen Psaki		Lawrence O'Donnell		The 11th Hour with Ali	
MTV	20	53	210	Bang	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office
NATGEO	65	162	121	Sharks vs.	Shark vs. Predator (R)		Orca vs. Great White (R)		Shark vs. Giant Croc		Shark Island Showdown		When Sharks (R)	
NICK	6	121	252	SpongeBob	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends	Bang	Bang	Bang	Bang
OWN	173	180	145	Deadline	Deadline: Tamron Hall		Deadline: Tamron Hall		Deadline: Tamron Hall		20/20 on OWN		20/20 on OWN: Wolfpack	
PARMT	36	56	54	(6:00) School of Rock (2003, Comedy) Jack Black. ★★★				Dodgeball: A True Underdog Story (2004) PG-13 ★★★				School of Rock (2003) Jack Black. ★★★		
SNY	26	60	77	Pre Game	MLB Baseball: Kansas City Royals at New York Mets from Citi Field. Live.						Post Game	Sports	Sports	Sports
SYFY	17	48	180	The Da Vinci Code (2006, Mystery) Tom Hanks. PG-13 ★★★						Holes (2003, Drama) Shia LaBeouf. PG ★★★				
TBS	8	39	52	MLB Baseball: New York Yankees at Tampa Bay Rays. Live.						MLB on TBS	Bang	Bang	The Office	The Office
TCM	82	41	230	(6:15) I Love You Again (1940, Comedy)			Oscar Micheaux (2021) Chuck D.			Hell's Angels (1930, Drama) Ben Lyon. NR ★★★½				
TLC	52	28	139	Baylen (R)	Baylen Out Loud (R)		Baylen Out Loud		Baylen Out Loud		(10:01) Jay & Pamela		Little Singles: Sandals (R)	
TNT	3	37	51	(5:30) Meg 2: The Trench (2023, Action)			65 (2023, Action) Adam Driver. PG-13 ★★½				65 (2023, Action) Adam Driver. PG-13 ★★½			
TVLAND	85	34	241	(6:24) Andy	Loves Ray.	Loves Ray.	Loves Ray.	Loves Ray.	(9:20) Loves Raymond		Loves Ray.	Loves Ray.	Queens	Queens
USA	16	38	50	(6:00) SVU	Law & Order: SVU		Law & Order: SVU		Law & Order: SVU		Law & Order: SVU		Law & Order: SVU	
VH1	19	52	217	Wife/Kids	Wife/Kids	Wife/Kids	Basketball Wives: Finale		Basketball Wives (R)		Basketball Wives (R)		Basketball Wives (R)	
WE	59	42	149	Minds	Criminal Minds		Criminal Minds		Criminal Minds		Criminal Minds: In Heat		Criminal Minds	
YES	53	89	76	MLB Baseball: New York Yankees at Tampa Bay Rays. Live.						Postgame	YanksExtra	The Bare Knuckle Show		Sportico
HBO	511	301	400	(6:40) Of the Dragon (R)		Life Larry	(8:15) John Wick (2014, Action) Keanu Reeves. R ★★★½				House of the Dragon (R)		Life Larry	The Florid
MAX	531	371	420	(5:45) The Town (2010) R		(7:50) All Eyez on Me (2017, Drama) Demetrius Shipp Jr. R ★★½					Blood Father (2016, Action) Mel Gibson.			Catfish ★★★
MGM Plus	595		395	(5:35) Seabiscuit (2003, Drama) ★★★			The Aviator (2004, Drama) Leonardo DiCaprio. PG-13 ★★★½						Friday Night Lights (2004)	
PARSHO	551	321	365	Baby Driver (2017, Action) Ansel Elgort.			The Mechanic (2011) Jason Statham. R			Faster (2010, Action) Dwayne Johnson.			(11:15) Killerman (2019) ★★	

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AP

Captain Tim Ream (left) and Sebastian Berhalter leave the pitch after the United States' uninspired Round of 16 performance against Belgium. After star striker Folarin Balogun was stunningly cleared to play, the stage was set for a breakthrough win, but the U.S. fell flat and was knocked out.

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UNCLE SCRAM!

U.S. given boot by Belgium in ugly end to Cup

4-1

U.S. ELIMINATED

A CAM-DO ATTITUDE FIRED-UP SCHLITTLER BOUNCES BACK TO DOMINATE RAYS / PAGES 42-43

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